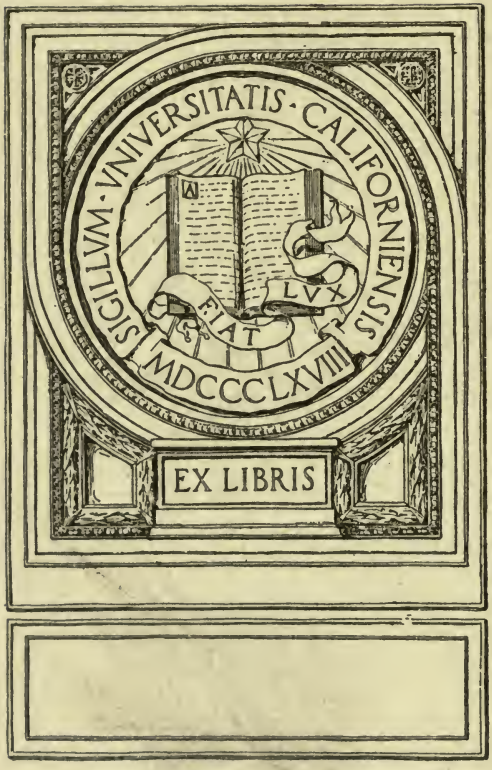
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REFLECTIONS
OF A NON-COMBATANT

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BY

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INTRODUCTION.

It was the same country that produced two opposite types of national politics—Macchiavelli and Mazzini; Macchiavelli deals with the exigencies of national life, and nothing else; Mazzini is the prophet of a higher conception of international society, in which the good of each nation will contribute to the good of all, and in which humanity, and not nationality, will be the last, though not the only word. Our modern statecraft is not yet wholly Mazzinian, but we are apt to forget how far it is, in some degree, inevitably Macchiavellian.

In this little work an attempt has been made to show that mankind is working simultaneously on two planes; the plane of national and international politics, and the plane of human aspiration and endeavour, and that the laws of the one are not the laws of the other. Macchiavellism, of which the modern name is Bismarckianism,

or more popularly, Bernhardism, may be quite right politically, and quite wrong judged from the general human standpoint. Thus the war that is ruthless and uncivilized may be true war, though it be not the war of humane and civilized peoples; unscrupulous diplomacy may be genuine diplomacy though it be not the diplomacy of a moral and progressive state. Expediency is the last word in purely national politics and war; expediency is not the last word of humanity. But it is humanity which constitutes the deepest, widest, and most universal reality; and it is, therefore, human considerations which will eventually shape national life, and not nationalism that will shape humanity.

Meanwhile the states that direct their action and policy according to purely national considerations without any regard to the general needs of mankind, have an advantage in their own sphere, from their concentrating all their forces to one end; while the states whose policy is influenced by wider human motives, are at a temporary disadvantage, though the future is for them. The militarism and the politics of the dawn are militarism and politics that are outgrowing their own garments. Yet I believe

that a great mistake is made when we fail to recognize that a philosophy may be sound as applied to its own object though its principles be immoral and detestable when moved into another sphere. Macchiavellism is sound as regards the ends to which it was directed; and it is an error to term it immoral, as exercised in its own domain, because that domain admits of neither moral nor immoral principles and actions.

The question, then, to ask, of states and statesmen, is not whether their diplomacy be ruled by principles of expediency or morality, whether the war they wage be ruled by laws of humanity or cruelty, but whether both their policy and their militarism be subservient to nobler and more universal ends than those of pure national egotism; whether, in fact, they are diplomats, and nothing else, generals, and nothing else, or whether they are on the line of progress towards a more comprehensive national life which can be a factor in the universal life of mankind as one great human family.

The "reflections of this non-combatant" are not, then, set forth as an indictment of German politics and German military methods, but as an indictment of the temper that lies behind such

politics and such methods, whether they be found amongst Germans or others; an indictment of the national temper that is opposed to universal human progress and can only find a suitable vent in Macchiavellian diplomacy and barbarous warfare.

War, in the mind of that non-combatant, is something essentially brutal and terrible; humane regulations can scratch its surface, but not alter its nature. When we go to war we enter on a condition of things in which ordinary laws of morality are suspended; in which Christianity, as such, has no true part. The more highly developed races will inevitably carry higher considerations even into their warlike methods, but this is because they are passing out of the military stage of nationalism into a higher plane of human existence. The less highly developed races will pass easily into the most barbarous extremes in their military methods, for the simple reason that their ordinary national temper is one that finds a fitting outlet in such methods. More important, therefore, than the question as to the way in which we make war is the question as to the reasons for which we make it, and the aims we would attain by it; more detestable than the

atrocities and injustices which may be perpetrated during a war is the philosophy of national egotism which regards outrages to humanity as an accidental evil in the development of its ambitions.

War will be inevitable until international human justice is supreme; war will be noble or base according to the ends for which it is waged, and the motives by which it is inspired; but war, to the end, will be barbarous in a greater or a less degree, and it is the temper which produces it, and not the way in which it is conducted, in which the true injury to human progress consists.

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CHAPTER I.

IN TIME OF WAR.

In this country, as I write, it would almost seem as though our love for one another had kindled and grown strong in exact proportion to our wrath against the enemy. Those who habitually live their own lives, in quiet comfort, and trouble little about the needs of others, are now hurrying to the Red Cross depots with offers of service; are turning their houses into prospective hospitals; are cutting off their own superfluities to provide for the necessities of their poorer brethren.

Between the classes suspicion is lulled; a spirit of fraternity and equality makes itself felt. But, above all, those qualities which danger calls forth, and which are generally reserved for heroic occasions, blossom like hedge-flowers; the instinct of self-preservation is absorbed in the desire for service; men and women scramble for an occasion of danger, and it would seem as though death were more highly prized than life.

There are characters, ordinarily worthless and undisciplined, that suddenly develop latent forces of generosity and devotedness; they have found their opportunity, and their light will burn brightly during this time of crisis and be quenched, if quenched it be, in glory. The world will forget how they lived, and will remember only how they died.

We see, in fact, for the moment, a prevalence of the soldier type in all its best qualities; a type that exists in virtue of the possibility of war, and unfolds its latent qualities when war breaks forth.

For let us remember that the type of humanity which is begotten by war is a type that will always exist so long as war remains a possibility. If centuries passed without any outbreak of hostilities, yet the qualities that war demands would never perish as long as its occurrence might be expected.

In virtue of war then, or of its likelihood, the soldier continues to exist—the man of silent deeds, of unquestioning obedience, of personal self-forgetfulness, of unboasting courage, of cheerful acceptance of danger and death.

By war too is stimulated that feeling of solidarity of which we are now so conscious. Individual value is, for the moment, at a discount; we are all as atoms in the life of our country.

To strong personalities this overwhelming sense of incorporation is even painful, because they are, at the same time, conscious that their individual contribution to the common stock is robbed of its full and distinct value—in the massing of energy which a war demands the memory of certain deep and abiding values is effaced; vast mental treasures become as useless as gold on a desert island. That intensity of corporate life which gives strength to the weak in some sense weakens the strong, for there is scope for but one common aim and aspiration; there is no scope for light and shade of expression, for variety of outlook, for richer and nobler grades of perception and effort than the general level of mankind can attain. In fact, our fortunes are pooled; we are strong as the society to which we belong is strong, but no stronger so far as any form of social achievement is concerned. The great ones amongst us, unless they be military authorities, can no longer compel attention, because they have been absorbed into the common reservoir of national life.

This is a psychological phenomenon of which a good many must be dimly aware, though they may not have taken clear account of it. It is an experience that is great indeed, in some sense, but that is also painful and belittling, for if the

valleys are filled up, the mountains are pulled down.

Perhaps this psychological effect is more marked in our modern warfare than it was in the days when fighting was general and frequent. It is noteworthy that thought, except on matters of military or historic interest, seems to have stood still; yet the Elizabethan era was as famous for its intellectual as for its military exploits; the knapsack of the soldier had place for book and pen and paper as well as objects of material necessity. It is probably a result first of our centralization, secondly of the dependence of intellectual achievement on commercial conditions, that in wartime we can now think and talk of nothing but war.

Then, too, the disasters of modern warfare are so far-reaching and universal, that the world can hardly do other than stand still to see what will be left when the crisis is past.

Even in the actual mechanism of modern warfare this suppression of individual merits is to be noted. There is a levelling of values, an effacement of personal qualities and distinctions which must steadily increase as war becomes more and more a work of scientific calculation rather than of genius and enterprise. Above all in the anti-democratic system of close formation, so much

employed by the Germans, is this uniformity of values to be noted. A few of the leaders may find scope for special qualities of mind or character, for the majority there is not any chance of doing more because they would or could do more. A large number of our friends, a larger number of our enemies who have been sacrificed in this war were just food for powder; their lives were poured forth in a flood so vast that the separate drops could be counted, indeed, with our care for mere number, but could not possibly be valued. The brave man, giving his life generously in the belief that he gave it for a good cause, will have fallen side by side with his selfish or cowardly comrade; his personal nobility will have furthered the cause no better than the unwilling sacrifice of his companion. A certain number had to be killed, and he was one of them. The fine and the coarse material were woven into one web, and its threads will, perhaps, never be disentangled. This is, indeed, one of the most tragic features of a war; we lose our best along with our worst, and are not even aware of the difference; their contribution has been reduced to one value.

Yet, on the other hand, the very ruthlessness of war has its counter-balancing advantages. When we are face to face with necessity we are freed

from our slavery to many petty considerations of human respect or self-interest, that restrain us at other times from doing what, at bottom, we know to be best. The most democratic amongst us should have the honesty to recognize that the desire to maintain an appearance of humanity has sometimes a weakening and immoral influence on the measures of a democratic government. It is not always motives of humanity that restrain the action of such a government in its dealings with social evils: it is its fear of not being reckoned humane. In time of war the mercy that is inspired by unconscientious motives runs dry; and many social plague-spots are summarily eradicated. We are in a condition in which we act firmly and uncompromisingly according to the light we possess, though we are not in a condition of progress towards yet fuller and clearer light. The best type of soldier is, in short, for the moment our highest ideal; the moral reformer, the servant or martyr of truth, the prophet of things to come must fall into rank with the rest, working for what is immediately necessary until mankind can again turn to interests that are abiding and eternal.

But it is important not to forget that we are, indeed, thus waiting for the time when we can again set our feet on the path of the future. For a crisis, such as that which we are undergoing,

is bound to exercise in some respects a reactionary influence. For example, because there was, before the war, a certain party amongst us which, with or without reasonable grounds for their apprehensions, foretold the present crisis, there is a tendency, now that they have been proved right, to pay them more honour than is properly their due. So far as their object was simply to warn their country of a coming danger they deserve nothing but gratitude; so far as they had and have the militarist sense of militarism, we shall look to them only in as much as we desire a permanent condition of militarism.

Had this section of our community prevailed, in its own day, and swept the country into an earlier, and less obviously unavoidable war, should we have fought with those advantages that we now possess? should we have gone to battle with the same moral force? should we have presented the undivided front of men who accept the horrors of warfare in order to end them?

To some degree it may be said that the Germanophobes of England are those with the more German and less English outlook. They hate Germany and would fight her because they regard her as a rival in the path of England's ambition.

Thus Professor Cramb wrote :—

What is likely to result when the first nation, though pursuing colossal organic ideals, yet seems to have become almost weary of the glory of empire, expressing frequently the desire for arbitration, for the limitation of armaments, a "naval holiday," peace at any price; when its war-spirit, its energy, its sense of heroism are apparently diminishing, and the mere craving for life and its comforts seems to be conquering every other passion—as if to this nation the aim of all life were the avoidance of suffering—what, I say, is likely to result if, confronting this, you have a nation high in its courage, etc.[1]

And again :—

If these, then, are the legitimate impulses, the just ambitions of Germany—and what Englishman remembering the methods by which the British empire has been established in India, in America, in Africa, in Egypt, dare arraign those impulses or those ambitions?—if these are the modes which the "will to power" assumes in modern Germany, what of England, and those needs of England with which they enter most immediately into collision?[2]

These words express not an anti-German attitude and policy, but the wish to see militarist England the master of militarist Germany.

Referring to the same party in France, a writer in the "Entretiens des non-combattants durant la guerre," addressing the Germans, says :—

Their hostility is against your persons, and not your principles. . . . If your principles were transported into

[1] "Germany and England," pp. 42-4.

[2] *Idem*, pp. 121-2.

France and turned to French ends, they would not object to them. In fact, they reproach you for not being French, which is not your own fault and is therefore irremediable. But because you are not French they are obliged to will your destruction, while secretly desiring to succeed you.[1]

Let those who honestly cherish this form of national ambition stand by their views; but it would be, from the other point of view, a disastrous result of the war if those who regard militarism as a fallacy, who believe in a nationalism that need not express itself in the desire to dominate, who love their own country without wishing that she should oppress others, were to lose confidence in their own ideal because they had not fully gauged the force of the obstacles that opposed its fulfilment, and were to become militarist in virtue of their opposition to militarism.

A spiritual genius has told us that in times of calm we should remember our periods of trouble, and that in times of trouble we should, similarly, look back to our days of calm. So while brute force, supported by the ingenuity of mechanical science, has to be reinforced by all the moral qualities we can muster to its aid, let us look back and forward to the more normal periods,

[1] These "Entretiens" from which I shall quote more than once, are published weekly by the "Union pour la Vérité," 21, rue Visconti, Paris.

when it is the servant, and not the sovereign, of moral and intellectual powers.

The pacifist is paying for his defiance of facts by being rolled round in a chaos of facts; but we need not, for this, abandon a philosophy which has room for facts as well as ideals.

The French were forced, at the very moment when war broke out, to face this problem in a brutal form. Jaurès was assassinated—and yet his party rallied, without hesitation, under the banner of its country. Was this the refutation of all that for which Jaurès had lived and laboured? So his opponents declared, but so did not those whose patriotism was of a broader character. Jaurès may have been mistaken, dangerously mistaken, as to the inevitability of war, but it need not follow therefrom that he was mistaken in everything else.

At his funeral M. Jouhaux, secretary of the "General Confederation of Labour," uttered the following words:—

Jaurès was our strength in our ardent efforts for peace. It is not his fault, nor ours, if peace has not prevailed. War has broken out. Before going forth to the great massacre, in the name of those workmen who have departed, in the name of those who will shortly depart, of whom I am one, I declare, before this coffin, our hatred of the savage imperialism that has perpetrated the horrible crime.

Those who heard the words of Jouhaux (says a writer in

the "Entretiens," from which we have drawn the quotation), and the bitterness of his cry, will hear them for ever. They came from the entrails of working France. Jouhaux disavowed nothing of the international Jauresian doctrine. He did not shrink when faced by fact. He was right—no fact can refute a doctrine that is established on right.

Nevertheless Maurras also was right on his own plane, when he said ("Action Française," 11 October, 1914) :—

"We have here the ordinary characteristic of the Jauresian fallacy: a permanent confusion between an order of facts that must be foreseen, calculated and prepared for, and an order of right that must rule our wills, our thoughts, and our desires, but that can establish no material barrier against living realities. . . .

The Jauresian ideal has, unfortunately, suffered a more definitive eclipse than the disappearance of its author. . . .

It would be hard to point out any hopes that have been more clearly proved fallacious."

Maurras himself (continues the writer in the "Entretiens") is careful not to confound *right* and *fact;* but, on the other hand, he suppresses one of the terms; he is indifferent to *right*. And hence the meaning of this war escapes him, its fresh and unique character, its difference from the old wars of Kings. He also misses the secret of the force that urges the people, and the poor, and other peoples than our own, to this war. . . .

Without this conviction of right . . . we could, indeed, resist our enemy because he desires our death and we wish to live; we could not condemn him as unjust, and seek with our foreign allies, with all just men whose sympathies are with us, to cut off this enemy from the community of nations as being, not only our enemy, but the common enemy of mankind.

These words indicate how, in times of crisis, there is not only the danger that those who predicted it, being proved right on one point, will assume that they were right on every other, but there is also the danger that those who were opposed to them, not only in the practical estimate of the peril, but in their whole theory of political life, will waver in those deeper and more essential convictions which should be strengthened, rather than extinguished, by the war. In such case, so far from this war being a step to the ending of war, it would lead to the stronger establishment of militarism; it would set in a period of reaction, and throw us back to the policy of the Middle Ages. This would be, indeed, to take from mankind the price and refuse the article; to pour forth the blood of the people to quench their own aspirations; to become German in resisting pan-Germanism.

It must be remembered that non-combatants, not having the same outlet for their energies as the fighters, are more liable to become rancorous and petty in their hate. The soldiers will shout Christmas greetings to the enemy that he means to shoot to-morrow, will chaff him and fling tins of bully-beef from trench to trench; the non-combatants will be less large-minded. The spy-panic threatened, at one moment, to assume dangerous

dimensions in this country; and here and there unprincipled methods have been advocated by the non-combatant which the soldier would reject.

The following protest was made by an English publisher, in the early days of the war, against the taking of unfair advantage in the matter of copyright :—

COPYRIGHT OF GERMAN WORKS.

To the Editor of "The Times".

SIR,

A large number of German copyright works are being offered to publishers at the present time for translation. In many cases the would-be translators have obtained no permission or transfer of rights from the authors of these books, and it is, of course, impossible to do so in existing circumstances. To take advantage of this state of affairs in order to appropriate the property of others would, in the opinion of this Association, not only be a breach of the Berne Convention, but would also do discredit to a nation which is now fighting for the maintenance of honourable obligations.

May I express the hope that every publisher in Great Britain and Ireland who is approached in this way will refuse to publish works the translation rights of which have not been duly assigned.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES H. BLACKWOOD, *President*,
The Publishers' Association of
Great Britain and Ireland,
Stationers' Hall Court, E.C.

2 October, 1914.

This letter showed the influence of the war fever in commercial matters, and was a noble appeal for the maintenance of the ordinary laws of justice and fair play, with enemies, as with friends.

Still more significant was the controversy, which made many of us blush, instituted by Professor Sayce of Queen's College, Oxford, in regard to the intellectual merits of Germany. Though the letter has excited sufficient notice, it is worth while giving some extracts from it :—

It is astonishing that British scholars and politicians should still be found speaking of "our intellectual debt to Germany". It might have been supposed that after the lessons of the present war, German bluster would have been taken at its face value. But theories made in Germany have so long been accepted at the valuation of their authors both in this country and in America, where the younger generation has sat obediently at the feet of Teutonic professors, that it has become difficult to see them in their true light. It is worth while, therefore, examining in the dry light of reason what Germany has really done for culture and scientific progress.

As to music, I can say nothing, for I am not a musician. In literature Germany has Goethe, who occupies the first rank. Heine was a Jew, who regarded the Germans as barbarians. Schiller, the most characteristically German of German writers, was a milk-and-water Longfellow. In philosophy there are Kant and Hegel, but Kant was more than half Scottish in origin, and it is difficult to say what the

Hegelian philosophy would have been had the German language been more cultivated.

In science none of the great names is German. We look in vain for any that can be put by the side of those of Newton, Darwin, Faraday, Laplace, or Pasteur. Even in mechanical science hardly one of the great inventions of modern times—the steam engine, the telegraph and telephone, the motor-car, the aeroplane, the wireless telegraph—has been "made in Germany".

This letter was happily not left without answers from other of our English University Professors, from Prof. H. H. Turner, Dr. Percy Gardner, and others.

But that it should have been written, and even supported by other writers, men of education, is sufficient proof of the influence of the war-fever on non-combatants.

If Crusader and Saracen were capable, in their own day, of a chivalrous appreciation of each other's qualities, we should surely, in this century, be capable of distinguishing the Germany of Kaiser Wilhelm from the Germany of Goethe and Schiller; of Beethoven and Wagner; of Kant and Fichte and Hegel and Schopenhauer; of the vast army of disinterested German critics.

But, as has been remarked in many places, it is the non-fighters who are liable to take the war-fever in its most pernicious form. Not

only does it beget in them a disposition to rage and rend, but also to turn on those who do not share their desire to do so. They compose their hymns of hate and send them to the battlefield—but those are not the songs the soldier sings.

Mr. Stephen Graham asked of a young Russian officer :—

"How did you feel under fire?"

"It was unpleasant at first, but after a while it became even pleasant, exhilarating. One feels an extraordinary freedom in the midst of death—with the bullets whistling round. The same with all the soldiers: the wounded all want to get well and return to the fight. They fight with tears of joy in their eyes."

"They feel active hate towards the Germans?"

"No, I wouldn't say that. They regard them merely as the enemy, the old enemy."

"There is a certain beauty in war, in going to death with songs," said I.

"I would even say there is no greater beauty," says the young officer.

So war comes into its own in the popular imagination. Despite the praise of peace and the comfort of peace and even the fact that we are fighting to obtain peace, war seems to be a thing that must eternally recur, one of the human liturgies of beauty.[1]

In the battlefield bravery, self-forgetfulness, tenderness to the wounded comrade, generosity,

[1] "The Times," 24 September, 1914.

in many cases, to the enemy—but also, callousness, brutality, and outbreaks of frenzied savagery.

At home, a longing to serve, a cohesion of classes, a sinking of differences, a general devotedness—but also a tendency to take reprisals on our enemy by imitating what is worst in him, the danger of losing faith in the cause we are out to defend.

CHAPTER II.

WAR A FATALITY.

One of our straightest and most honest thinkers has told us that this war is the result of muddled thinking.[1] He believes that by thought society could be saved and ordered; that we only half know what we are doing, or trying to do, and that we start on our way to learn our lesson as we go along—with the result of many disasters in the course of that lesson.

Now Mr. Wells has given us no reason to suppose that he is so optimistic as to believe that an invasion of barbarians could be averted by clearer thinking on the part of the civilized invaded; but what we should gather from his reflections is that, in so far as civilized races have recourse to such methods for settling their differences, they are convicted of a want of plan and wisdom in their social and political system.

He says:—

[1] See "Nation," 29 August, article by H. G. Wells—"The War of the Mind".

All the realities of this war are things of the mind. This is a conflict of cultures and nothing else in the world. All the world-wide pain and weariness, fear and anxieties, the blood and destruction, the innumerable torn bodies of men and horses, the stench of putrefaction, the misery of hundreds of millions of human beings, the waste of mankind are but the material consequences of a false philosophy and foolish thinking.

Some of us can agree with Mr. Wells in his indictment of the stupidity of mankind and his exhortation to renewed and more thoughtful effort, but not in his optimistic conception of all that mankind could do by thinking a little harder.

Does he not, on this point, fall into the error of the pacifist, and ignore, not, indeed, like him, the plain and surface facts of life which all who will may see, but its deeper, wider, and more or less incalculable realities?

Said Juliana of Norwich, of the world as she beheld it :—

I marvelled how it might last : for methought it might suddenly have fallen to nought for littleness.

At a time like this are we not conscious of the amazing littleness of our world and of all human institutions? and yet are we not also aware of huge forces that have gone to the making of it, forces which man cannot wholly control, and yet in the midst of which he can direct his course?

All our building science will not save us from the results of an earthquake; all our social science will not save us from the results of elemental human passion.

Man did not plan his own making; nor does even an individual ever clearly know how far he is responsible for the best and the worst of his actions. That he is, to some extent, responsible, all but pure fatalists believe; but that he is wholly responsible few, with any profound knowledge of human nature, can maintain.

If this be true of the individual, how much more is it true of society? The collected wisdom of the whole world, even were it seated on the highest throne with universal power of domination, could not either foresee or hinder every human catastrophe. Man is stronger, and greater, perhaps even wiser, that his own conscious strength and wisdom. There are forces within him that must out, in spite of his own protestations. Passion, a poet has told us, is a force

> that makes, not follows, precedent;

yet if passion works most of the misery of the world it is also its very life.

War may be wicked, according to the pacifist; or a fine healthy exercise according to the militarist; but both are scratching but the surface of

the question until they recognize that it is something more than all this, that it is also a fatality.

Mr. Wells is more than right in urging us to think ourselves out of our tangle. Because we are greater than our own minds we cannot tell how far our strength reaches ; yet we know, also, that as we have learned to cross the ocean and to ride through the air, so also we are capable of using and directing, to some extent, the less tangible forces of our moral and spiritual life. If we cannot control immensity, we are, nevertheless, fashioned with organs to live in it :—

> Man is made to toil in the deep ; he is born to live in the gloom of life ; to fear his fate is to be as an owl afraid in the dark, a fish with hydrophobia.[1]

It is fatalism to regard fate as the supreme arbiter of our destiny ; to say that what is to be, will be, and make no effort to fashion our own future. It is not fatalism to recognize that the destiny of mankind is too vast to be moulded by any single generation ; that no co-operative effort could focus even the definite knowledge and wisdom of all humanity, much less its inchoate and undefined instincts and aspirations. To a certain extent the union of brains in any collective effort must produce a lower result in the order of intelligence than the single efforts of capable

[1] Brand.

individuals. The more we try to think together the stupider we seem to become, and our collective stupidity is one great element of that fatality we are bound to recognize. We all of us admit the fatality which is present to us in natural forces and their laws; we also recognize a certain fatality of circumstances in the history of every nation as of every individual. But we sometimes fail to recognize that social fatality which results from the impossibility of complete co-operation, try for it as we may. We are separated from one another by our mutual advantages and disadvantages; every movement we make in support of some one else diverges to some degree from the line that other is following. Mr. Wells points out, with truth, that we cannot act together because we do not think together; but the difficulty is that we are not able to think together.

Our degree of national responsibility, therefore, in any upheaval, is, like our degree of individual responsibility in private matters, one of the mysteries that cannot wholly be solved. We are able to apportion the share of blame to either belligerent up to a certain point only; but there is a dark background from which all human action only partially emerges. To confess these universal limitations is not to abandon effort, but to recognize the vastness of the enterprise.

One painful element of our trial is that we feel there is material in the world sufficient to produce a much better collective result than we actually succeed in achieving. Yet here again is another manifestation of fatality—we cannot bring these saving factors to bear on the entire mass. A man like Bismarck, gifted with his strong mind and strong will, can force on an entire nation a policy of pure political egotism, because such a policy is within the limits of the general understanding; even a Bismarck, with a policy of moral and social and national renovation, a policy of the dawn, beyond and above the actual social attainment of mankind, could not enforce it universally and immediately; he would come up against the law of fatality, which is, amongst societies and nations, the law of co-operative limitation.

Hence the pacifist is wrong in believing that men could, if they would, live in perpetual peace; but so is the militarist wrong in thinking that they can make war just when and where they will. We are all of us, and nations even more than individuals, the toys as well as the makers of destiny.

CHAPTER III.

KRIEG IST KRIEG!

A COMMON remark amongst non-combatants in England during the course of the present war has been that "Germany is not playing the game". This is not the place in which to discuss the actual details of the German campaign, or to criticize the conflicting statistics; what we have to study is two different estimates of the character and rules of warfare which have emerged from the present conflict. Of these two estimates one has been more openly professed by Germany, the other by England and France; the question, for us, is not so much which is the nobler estimate, but which is the truer one. It is one thing, and a good thing, to urge that war should be waged according to the most humane and chivalrous methods; it is another thing to maintain that these more civilized methods are proper to the very nature of war in itself.

Now the Germans are nothing if not thorough, and nowhere is their thoroughness more characteristically displayed than in their philosophy of militarism. The question to be discussed in this place is not as to which form of warfare we should choose—the English or the German; nor as to which form of warfare is truest to international regulations. There is another question which has, to my mind, been neglected; and that is the question whether the German conception of warfare, unpleasant as it may be, be not a correcter conception of war in itself than that form of warfare which is qualified and mitigated by extraneous laws. Shortly—is German war true war, untinged by characteristics that belong properly to other domains of life? Are the Germans right in the place where they stand, though they will be left behind if they do not soon move on? Is the war that is waged according to humane principles the war that is beginning to be ashamed of itself, and preparing its own extinction?

The natural law, to which all laws of Nature can be reduced, is the law of struggle. All intra-social property, all thoughts, inventions, and institutions, as indeed the social system itself, are a result of the intra-social struggle, in which one survives and another is cast out. The extra-social, the super-social struggle which guides the external development of societies, nations, and races is war. The internal development, the intra-social struggle, is man's daily work—the

struggle of thoughts, feelings, wishes, sciences, activities. The outward development, the super-social struggle is the sanguinary struggle of nations—war. In what does the creative power of this struggle consist? In growth and decay, in the victory of the one factor and in the defeat of the other.[1]

War constitutes, in fact, that appeal to physical force than which mankind has hitherto discovered no other final appeal. We have, it is true, another system of values according to which brute strength is not the deciding factor; there are qualities we estimate more highly than the muscular prowess of the prize-fighter; but it is a sad consequence of our mixed nature that, at a certain extreme stage of a dispute, physical force becomes the arbiter. As the finest mental qualities may be quenched and subdued by physical suffering, so the highest attainments of mankind may be subjected to the test of brute force. The gun becomes, on a wider scale, as almighty as the headache.

Every science has its own laws; laws that to be valid must be based on the nature of that science. If then war be a trial of brute force, it is only such laws as guide the operations of

[1] Clauss Wagner—"Der Krieg als schaffendes Weltprinzip". Quoted by Bernhardi in "Germany and the Next War".

brute force, strengthened, in the case of a human struggle, by the added resources of mind, that will be valid under all circumstances. Other laws, foreign to the true nature of war, may prevail by general consent; but they will not be the laws of war proper, and there will be, on all sides, a tendency to disregard them when necessity urges. In cricket our opponents are our friends, in war they are not; we shall scarcely be disposed to grant our enemy an artificial advantage when he will make use of it for our entire destruction.

The Germans have accepted the principles of militarism in their full force; the way to fight has, for them, but one law, and that is the law of the way to win. They are not "playing the game," because, for them, it is not a game.

I once heard a tale of some English soldiers in the South African war. There was a small detachment of our men, and three Boer soldiers were observed in the distance. The object was, of course, to master them in some way, and it would have been quite easy to do so, given the British superiority of numbers. But inspired by the old sporting spirit of the public school, the Englishmen, seeing that there were but three Boers, sent but three of their own men to attack them. This was not the way to win, nor was it,

even, the best way to avoid unnecessary bloodshed.

If old histories and poems may be credited, the Middle Ages knew something of this sporting conception of war, and though certain international conventions were then non-existent, yet the spirit of chivalry exerted its influence in turning war into a dangerous but noble game.

There were young French soldiers who embarked on the present campaign in that spirit, and who were bitterly disillusioned on finding that there was no place for chivalry and romanticism; that the job in front of them was one of deadly, material, unpoetical necessity; that to be generous was to be conquered.

> A wise lord (says Macchiavelli) cannot, nor ought he, to keep faith when such observances may be turned against him. . . . If men were entirely good this precept would not hold, but because they are bad and will not keep faith with you, you too are not bound to observe it with them.

So of the laws of chivalry in warfare. Their obligation is conditional on the mentality of the opponent. The laws of honourable warfare are the laws of something that is not strictly and exclusively warfare at all; they may be observed by general consent, but should they become thus universally observed it would denote that the appeal to brute force is being superseded by a

nobler appeal, that nations are passing out of the stage in which warfare is the final solution of their differences.

In an article quoted from the "Hamburger Nachrichten" by an English paper, Major-General von Disfurth is said to have thus expressed himself:—

No object whatever is served by taking any notice of the accusations of barbarity levelled against Germany by their foreign critics. Frankly, we are, and must be, barbarians, if by this word we understand those who wage war relentlessly to the uttermost degree. It would be incompatible with the dignity of the German Empire and with the proud traditions of the Prussian Army to defend our courageous soldiers from the accusations which have been hurled against them in foreign and neutral countries. We owe no explanations to anyone.

There is nothing for us to justify and nothing for us to explain away. Every act of whatever nature committed by our troops for the purpose of discouraging, defeating, and destroying our enemies is a brave act, a good deed, and is fully justified. There is no reason whatever why we should trouble ourselves about the notions concerning us in other countries. Certainly we should not worry about the opinions and feelings held in neutral countries. Germany stands supreme the arbiter of her own methods, which must in time of war be dictated to the world.

It is of no consequence whatever if all the monuments ever created, all the pictures ever painted, all the buildings ever erected by the great architects of the world be destroyed if, by their destruction, we promote Germany's victory over

the enemies who have vowed her complete annihilation.

In times of peace we might perhaps regard the loss of such things: but at the present moment not a word of regret, not a thought, should be squandered upon them. War is war, and must be waged with severity. The commonest, ugliest stone placed to mark the place of burial of a German Grenadier is a more glorious and venerable monument than all the cathedrals of Europe put together. They call us barbarians. What of it? We scorn them and their abuse.

For my part, I hope that in this war we have merited the title of barbarians. Let neutral peoples and our enemies stop their empty chatter, which may well be compared with the twitter of birds. Let them cease to talk of the cathedral of Rheims and of all the churches and all the castles in France which have shared its fate. These things do not interest us. Our troops must achieve victory. What else matters?[1]

Another German writer was quoted in "The Times" of 6 October, 1914, as saying, in the "Cologne Gazette":—

The German will always strive against the attempt to measure the whole world from the point of view of the sportsman and the non-sportsman. The German mind is too broad and too great for this. We have given Europe other "cultural" values than records in tennis and rowing. It is putting sport in the wrong place when a people has no

[1] Having quoted this passage just as it appeared in the "Sunday Chronicle" of 15 November, 1914, I have not verified the translation—the interest of the passage is in its being a typical presentment of a certain view.

other ideals than the ideals of sport, and when the language of sport is the expression for all situations in life without distinction.

The English are evidently lacking in understanding of the high seriousness of the war and totally lacking in appreciation of its moral importance. For the Englishman war is a very dramatic, very intense, and very profitable sport. The English will have to accustom themselves to German seriousness.

But most instructive of all is the handbook on "The Usages of War" issued by the General Staff of the German Army. In this document it is frankly declared that an army fights to win ; that international agreements which prove detrimental to this end have no binding force in warfare ; that many of them only exist for egotistic ends and are only to be observed from the dread of reprisals, which dread must sometimes be laid aside ; that cruelties of every kind may be greatly regretted on other grounds, but must be tolerated if they forward the success of the belligerent.

Thus :—

A war conducted with energy cannot be directed merely against the combatants of the enemy State and the positions they occupy, but it will and must in like manner seek to destroy the total intellectual and material resources of the latter. Humanitarian claims, such as the protection of men and their goods, can only be taken into consideration in so far as the nature and object of the war permit.

Again :—

The fact that such limitations of the unrestricted and reckless application of all the available means for the conduct of war, and thereby the humanization of the customary methods of pursuing war, really exist, and are actually observed by the armies of all civilized States, has in the course of the nineteenth century often led to attempts to develop, to extend, and thus to make universally binding these pre-existing usages of war ; to elevate them to the level of laws binding nations and armies, in other words to create a *codex belli* : a law of war. All these attempts have hitherto, with some few exceptions to be mentioned later, completely failed. If, therefore, in the following work the expression " the law of war " is used, it must be understood that by it is meant not a *lex scripta* introduced by international agreements but only a reciprocity of mutual agreement ; a limitation of arbitrary behaviour, which custom and conventionality, human friendliness, and a calculating egotism have erected, but for the observance of which there exists no express sanction, but only " the fear of reprisals " decides.

Further on :—

But a still more severe measure is the compulsion of the inhabitants to furnish information about their own army, its strategy, its resources, and its military secrets. The majority of writers of all nations are unanimous in their condemnation of this measure. Nevertheless, it cannot be entirely dispensed with ; doubtless it will be applied with regret, but the argument of war will frequently make it necessary.

Lastly, speaking of certain treatment adopted to quell a civil population, it declares :—

Herein lies its justification under the laws of war, but still more in the fact that it proved completely successful.[1]

Krieg ist Krieg and the Germany of Bernhardi will not admit that it is anything else. With German thoroughness, with moral unscrupulousness, it has shown us what unadulterated militarism can be.

To be quite honest, must we not admit that they have some truth and logic on their side; even though we would rather be illogical and disagree with them?

The observance of treaties has nothing to do with the appeal to brute force, and so it has nothing to do with warfare, *qua* warfare. It may be a law of international justice not to cross a certain boundary in order to crush our enemy, but no animal would observe such a law in attacking its adversary, and in so far as war is strictly a trial of brute force neither will man observe it. A gun can only be silenced by another gun, it cannot be plugged with "a piece of paper"; and if some nations respect such pieces of paper, while others do not, it is because

[1] The German War Book. Being "The Usages of War on Land," issued by the Great General Staff of the German Army. (London: John Murray. Price 2s. 6d.) (Quoted in "The Times" of 22 January, 1915.)

some nations decline the test of sheer brute supremacy, in which warfare truly consists.

Our troops must achieve victory—what else matters? General Disfurth is correct in his description of the war his country has waged; and are we not quite correct when we term this *German* warfare, and not rather warfare unqualified by other principles, and stripped of those ethical wrappings which are no part of its natural clothing? War, in itself, knows not conventions, and is deaf to humane entreaties. It is a brute struggle, of which victory is the single aim.

Germany even urges, and not always without truth, that humanitarian war may sometimes prove the more cruel of the two. Thus, in the document from which we have already quoted, we read :—

> By steeping himself in military history an officer will be able to guard himself against excessive humanitarian notions, it will teach him that certain severities are indispensable to war, nay more, that the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of them.

Macchiavelli had said long before :—

> Cesare Borgia was considered cruel; notwithstanding, his cruelty reconciled the Romagna, unified it, and restored it to peace and loyalty. And if this be rightly considered, he will be seen to have been much more merciful than the

Florentine people, who, to avoid a reputation for cruelty, permitted Pistoja to be destroyed.

War such as this, presents indeed a horrible spectacle, and there are nations that can no longer fight according to its methods; but if they fight at all they may have to meet those who recognize no others. For war is not sport, as the Englishman would regard it; nor is it a tournament waged according to the laws of chivalry, as the French would have it. War is war in the German sense, it is not cricket. Let the world judge it for what it is, and then decide whether or not it is to be a lasting factor of international life. Let the decision not be based on false premisses, on a conception of war that is sporting or chivalrous, but not true. We say that the Germans are the militarist race of Europe; let us then admit that it is they who know most about militarism.

There are, indeed, cases in which not even any military object has been achieved by ruthless and cruel actions—such then must be ascribed to temperament, and not to militarism. But in so far as success is promoted by inhuman methods, those methods are warlike methods, however detestable they may be.

The world is slowly, but surely, rising up against such a philosophy; and all its courage

and ability will not eventually save the nation that continues to be ruled by it. But this is because the world is slowly, but surely, rejecting the test of brute force. We think we are civilizing warfare—we are actually working for its abolition ; for civilization and warfare are irreconcilable opposites, though they may be bound to temporary co-existence.

CHAPTER IV.

DIPLOMACY AND WAR.

In some respects mediaeval warfare was not so productive of international prejudice and hatred as our modern warfare. It was frankly accepted as the natural occupation of man ; little effort was made to set forth its justification ; it was a tussle of contending forces, and the object was to prove oneself the strongest, and not to prove oneself in the right.

Nowadays war is preceded by a lengthy phase of negotiation in which the respective rights of either side are set forward, contested, defended, adjusted, readjusted, until there ensues so vast and so tangled a web that it is easy for the rulers of both contending parties to persuade their people of the absolute justice of their own cause, and the perfidy of their opponents. Had they entered on war, as often in olden days, from avowed motives of conquest or ambition, there would not have been occasion for this added bitterness of moral indignation.

In fact, although there may be fairly clear

proof that one side, or the other, is waging an unjust war of aggression, we European nations have at least attained a degree of civilization at which we do not care to avow such purely egotistic motives. Even Germany, in her official pronouncements, has made no open profession of Bismarckianism, and has avoided the expression of such views as those with which the school of Treitschke has familiarized us. She has declared that she is fighting for her existence ; and only because she must fight.

As a consequence of this general attitude diplomacy has come to be regarded as, in some sense, the opposite in method and end to militarism ; many people believe that it is exercised solely in the interests of peace, and that the breakdown of diplomacy is the beginning of war. At the outbreak of hostilities the ambassador, who has been the much courted guest of the country in which he resides, is furnished with his passport and departs ; and to the public this seems as though he were the messenger of peace, and that the closing of the embassy shutters is our modern equivalent of the opening of the temple of Janus.[1]

It is obviously not our diplomats themselves

[1] On this subject see the excellent chapter on Foreign Policy in "The War and Democracy". Macmillan & Co.

who will endeavour to disturb such illusions; and yet an illusion it is. For although diplomacy, like militarism, has been influenced by the progress of humanity at large, and has become, especially in some countries, and as exercised by certain personalities, not pure diplomacy, but diplomacy mingled with and qualified by wider ethical considerations, yet this latter form of diplomacy is not diplomacy in its true and rigorous sense. Diplomacy, in fact, is not the opposite of war, but is another form of warfare. The enemy's ambassador departs, on the outbreak of hostilities, not because he is the representative of peace, but because the war of statesmanship and diplomacy is at an end, and the war of militarism and force has begun. The tongue has ended its contest, the right arm has entered on its work; speech is over, blows have begun.

In making such a statement one need not overlook the immense services rendered by the Foreign Offices of each country to the people under their care. As far as the influence of a Government extends, so far its subjects can rely on its guidance and protection. But this is another department of the business with which we are not here concerned.

Neither is it to be denied that diplomacy is largely exercised in the interests of peace; and

we have certainly had good example, in this country, of what a Foreign Office can and will do to compose differences and avert hostilities. But this does not alter the main issue. The Foreign Office of each country and its Diplomatic Service exist for the interests of that country, and no other; they do not exist for the cause of humanity at large, nor for the disinterested pursuit of the good of all. Hence they do not exist for the cause of peace, but to protect the interests of the country which they represent in time of peace. In so far as a wider and more universally human spirit is beginning to permeate the diplomatic system, that system is being transformed into something other and higher than pure diplomacy.

We owe it to the thoroughness of the German work and character, to their power of concentration on a single aim, as well as to a certain lack on their part of tact and delicacy and subtle deception, that they give us a thing just for what it is, in its breadth and its length, its force and its meaning, without any deceiving admixture of foreign elements. When they take up a thing it is to use it for what it is worth; to make it go as far as ever it can go; to work it according to its own laws and nature without regard to other objects which may be affected

by its use. Thus when the Germans took up criticism, it became the higher criticism, i.e. criticism and nothing else; criticism ruthless and unfettered, unaffected by old established traditions or sacred values. To their concentrated scholarship in this field we owe, at least in part, our acceptance of the rights of criticism in its own domain.

In like manner when Germans discuss the philosophy of war, whether we accept that philosophy or not in its practical bearings, we have at least to acknowledge that war with them, as we have seen in the last chapter, is war, and not a kind of cricket, as with the English, nor tinted with the romantic pursuit of glory, as with the French. German books are the longest books, and German guns are the biggest guns, and German war is just war and nothing else, an effort to obtain supremacy by sheer brute force.

So too with diplomacy; and here we have the Maker of Germany to enlighten us. The diplomacy of Bismarck was genuine, naked diplomacy, with no touch of idealism; it was the effort to obtain supremacy, not by force of arms, but by foresight, and craft, and the uncompromising pursuit of the interests of the country he served. He was a diplomat, and not a warrior—but he was no anti-militarist—the soldier was, in his con-

ception, the tool of the statesman, as the statesman was the servant of his king and country. National politics, or diplomacy, were not only, in his mind, a form of war, but were the highest, the supreme form of war. It was the duty of the statesman to keep himself in a condition of complete detachment from all outside sympathies or inclinations; his attitude towards another country was to be one of neither love nor hatred, but of perfect indifference as regarded the interests or existence of that country in itself, and of foresight and promptitude to seize any occasion in which it might serve the interests of his own country.

This policy of blood and iron was, in a certain sense, singularly bloodless. Coldly, dispassionately, the statesman looked forth to see how the welfare or destruction of the rest of the world would affect his own land. Anything in the nature of world-wide sympathies, or broad international aims of an ethical character, would have been, in the opinion of Bismarck, almost immoral and quite treasonous.

Thus he writes to Gerlach on 11 May, 1857 :—

> I have always answered the question as to whether my sympathies were Russian or Westerly by the reply that I am *Prussian*, and that my ideal for Foreign Ministers is that their decisions should be unprejudiced and free from all

impressions of aversion or preference for foreign lands and their rulers. . . . I would with perfect contentment direct our troops against the French or the Russians, the English or the Austrians, so soon as I was convinced as to what was to the best interest of sound and considered Prussian policy.[1]

In another place he says to the same :—

Sympathy or antipathy with foreign powers or personalities is not compatible with my sense of duty as Foreign Minister of my country . . . such sentiments contain a germ of infidelity to one's Master or one's country.

And he believes that all other statesmen are inspired by the same belief, for

Every other government measures its actions strictly according to its own interests, however much it may drape its conduct with honest or sentimental motives.[2]

To the same he says, further on, that the apparatus of Diplomacy is but a vain expenditure of revenue if it be not thus directed to definite national gain.

In all this we behold complete detachment, not only from all romantic or sentimental instincts, but also from any kind of ethical consideration. Statesmen cannot do wrong in a universal sense because they have no universal duty. Bismarck would have scorned an attempt to rouse moral indignation in a national dispute, whether

[1] "Gedanken und Erinnerungen," Vol. I, p. 171.

[2] *Idem*, p. 158.

on behalf of his own country or of any other; each side did its duty in seeking its own interests whether by methods of statesmanship or of war.

Bismarck was responsible for the war with Austria, but he was also responsible for its interruption in the full tide of Prussian victory, so soon as the political end was gained. Soldiers might win glory so long as it suited the interests of the politician that they should do so; but they must dance to another tune when they had achieved the end for which they were put in action.

When his King urged the moral necessity of chastening the guilty enemy, his minister calmly answered that:—

> We have not to fulfil the office of judges, but to advance the German policy; Austria's rivalry with us is no more reprehensible than ours with her; our single duty is the formation or preparation for German national unity under the King of Prussia.[1]

He sees that a pursuit of justice, even towards his own country, will not further the single end he has in view; useless possessions will weaken and embarrass her.

With the help of the Crown Prince Frederick, he attained his end on this occasion; and the King yielded to his minister and abandoned the

[1] "Gedanken und Erinnerungen," Vol. I, p. 46.

path of military glory on which he was making such rapid progress.

It may now be urged that it is not from Bismarck that we are to draw our conception of international statesmanship; that it is perfectly plain that there have been, and are, statesmen whose international philosophy and ethical code are other and better; that the Germans themselves, in their official utterances during the course of this war, have professed contrary views and doctrines; have declared that it is they who have been forced into war, and that their national aims were upright and disinterested.

Evidently all official diplomatic announcements, with very few exceptions, must be taken with regard to the source whence they emanate; as, to a greater or lesser extent, utterances of the word-war of diplomacy. Yet, on the whole, the political creed of a country is displayed in such a crisis as the present one; and I will again dare to maintain that the Germans, with their intellectual thoroughness, give us the most genuine and real presentment of diplomacy as of militarism.

Now let us turn to the speech of one of our statesmen during the course of this war. Mr. Lloyd George, speaking at the City Temple on 10 November, 1914, declares that, even in war, it is not strength nor military efficiency, nor politi-

cal wile and craft, that will be the supreme deciding factors. Even in international politics, even in international war, the higher and more remote considerations that are based on ethical dictates will avail the party that is guided by them.

> The fundamental error of the German calculation is becoming more manifest every day. They are beginning to realize that justice is the greatest of all military assets. In a long struggle it is the heart that tells, and injustice weakens the heart of nations. . . . This war is demonstrating that the justice of a nation's cause is, in itself, a military equipment of the first magnitude and importance.

May such words be placed over against those of Bismarck or Bernhardi, as representative of another, and nobler, form of politics?

I think not; I think that they are the utterances, not of diplomacy or national politics, but of a wider and more human philosophy which is struggling to supersede them. I think that just as some nations are developing beyond the stage of militarism so too they are developing beyond the stage of purely national politics, whose aim is one of self-interest, whose weapon is diplomacy. I think that all the civilized races of mankind are in a transitional stage in which old methods are being employed under the guidance of new principles, and that the result is a somewhat perplexing mixture of moral and non-moral laws

and motives. To some extent this confusion was bound to result so soon as mankind passed out of a condition of pure savagery, in which force and wile were the laws of existence ; but it becomes more and more acute as the world advances to a yet higher and more spiritual phase of civilization.

War is, in its true essence, a trial of brute force, with none of the varnish and gilding which is added to it by a gentlemanly code of sport and honour. Diplomacy is, in its true essence, a war of wits, which should be untouched by moral considerations.

But human progress is made by slow and prolonged stages ; and the methods of the lower stage will be tinctured and transformed by principles proper to a higher stage before they are actually abandoned. War becomes in part a sport, a game with its laws of honour and fair play, before its horrors are finally condemned and abandoned. Diplomacy gets coloured with moral and humane considerations, before it can be set aside for international intercourse based on human brotherhood and co-operation. Meanwhile diplomacy has for its part to avert war, and will probably outlive it—yet its true aim is not contrary to militarism though its methods are different.

CHAPTER V.

TREATIES AND CONVENTIONS.

How far may we count on the observance of treaties and conventions in time of war? This is surely a question that must be asked at the next Peace Conference unless we still prefer to take for granted pledges that are eminently risky and uncertain.

First of all let us have the courage to acknowledge that, when countries go to war, it is because the ordinary methods of international justice have failed. The adversaries practically say to one another—"I know I am right, but since you do not admit it, and there is no one to make you do so, I shall take by force what you will not yield to any other form of persuasion".

It is *both* sides that make this declaration, hence it is obvious that the adjustments of international politics have broken down, and that each side is now determined to get what it can by ultimate and extreme methods.

Now war, like everything else, has its own

laws and constitutions : its character is ruthless, its methods violent. It is a life-and-death struggle, in which both sides aim, at least so far as military considerations reach, at mutual destruction. Their object is to break each other's strength, and not to spare each other needless suffering ; and, indeed, the amount of needless suffering spared by the observance of Red Cross Conventions will always be small in comparison with the amount inflicted by the accepted code of belligerents.

In primitive warfare the observance of previous agreements had no place ; and primitive warfare was warfare in its genuine and unqualified character. How far, then, have we a right to count on the maintenance of treaties and conventions when the struggle is vital and intense? Must a nation perish, for instance, rather than break the word it has written on an international document? or does the law of life, in such a crisis, supersede all other laws?

Mr. Hilaire Belloc wrote some strong words in his article of 16 January, 1915, in "Land and Water," on the blockade system. These words were written after the American protest, and implied, perhaps, more than the writer could openly say :—

If you do not (he writes) prevent everything you *possibly can prevent* from going into the blockaded area, then your blockade is imperfect and will almost certainly fail. You may have excellent moral, religious, or political reasons for thus running the risk of losing the war; but you can have no *military* reason. As a military operation, to allow cotton, let us say, to go into Germany, and to forbid copper, is meaningless. What you are fighting is the whole nation with all its resources, economic and social, and inasmuch as you allow those resources to be fed, by so much do you increase the chances of the enemy's winning and your losing, and by so much do you kill and wound your own soldiers, deplete your own wealth, and prolong the duration of hostilities.

In a previous paragraph we read :—

If the German Empire had the luck to cripple the English fleet and its lesser Allies, it would establish a blockade with these islands. It would not allow cotton to go through and thus keep Lancashire in employment while forbidding rubber to go through, or copper, because these two articles were supposed to be of special military value. It would allow nothing to go through, for its aim would be the reduction of the blockaded party.

The laws and conventions of international warfare have been established for many motives of very different moral grade. The same must be said in regard to political treaties. There are laws of humanity that have been laid down for the common advantage of all contending parties; there are clauses of a treaty that are established

in the interest of the balance of powers, and that are yet more to the interest of one or two nations than of others ; there are conventions of a mixed order, with a political as well as a humane character, such as those in favour of the neutrality of small countries, which are established, not only in the interest of those countries, but also in the interest of those which would be affected by the violation of their neutrality ; there are also conventions directed towards a wider aim of general humanity, an aim which can only be ultimately and perfectly attained by the total cessation of war. And in regard to all these varied classes of convention, there are men who adopt them for political, and men who adopt them for humane, ends. The latter are often the instruments of the former, though, in the long run, they will be their masters ; when, that is to say, the general human interest has become supreme.

But meanwhile a war is, in its very essence, the reduction to nought of a treaty ; it is, in many cases, the ultimate result of some inadequate treaty, and a proof of its futility. How far, then, can we expect belligerents to stand by those treaties in its conduct?

As to those laws which have been established for the mutual advantage of both contending parties, they have the best chance of being

maintained, in the stress of war, in so far as both sides find their own interest in their observance. Such are the Red Cross Conventions, and others directed to the mitigation of needless suffering, or the establishment of rules of fair play, which are for the good of both sides.

Yet even these conventions are liable to be violated by nations in which the old primitive and barbaric conceptions still hold; in which militarism is supreme, and war is war and nothing else. Such conduct would be wholly impolitic if it resulted, as it might do, in retaliation from the other side; yet a nation whose aim is military success might even risk such reprisals. On the whole, however, they might derive from their methods more than the just measure of advantage, for it will sometimes happen that the other side, from the fact that it has reached a higher grade of refinement and civilization, and from very pride and sense of honour, will not retaliate by the same barbarous methods. The only resource of countries which remained faithful, under stress of war, to the laws they had established for the general advantage in time of peace, would be, in future, to decline such conventions with the nation that had violated them; and to wage war, in future, with such, as they

would with barbarous races; not therefore, we would hope, becoming barbarous themselves, but neither granting, nor accepting, the mutual obligations of a common code.

But with regard to those other conventions, which have been established in the interest of political considerations, is it not somewhat dishonest to refuse to admit that every country will violate them in cases of vital and immediate necessity? If our national existence were doomed to extinction unless we marched through a neutral territory, should we feel ourselves bound to sign the death-warrant of our country rather than violate a political compact? Those nations which have advanced beyond the stage of unqualified ego-centricism, which are already on the road to a higher civilization in which the argument of war will become obsolete, will, indeed, only disregard their political promises when they find themselves with their backs to the wall, and would have to abandon, with their national existence, all the reasons they had for entering on that past contract, and all the strength they have to defend it; but if that hour should strike, and the choice lay between national life and national extinction, who will maintain that their duty would be to die? An individual may die in such an instance, because he casts away his in-

dividual interests for a common cause ; a nation will not die in such an instance, because the common cause is not yet sufficiently living and defined to demand such a sacrifice. And before the common cause has become thus living and defined, it is likely that war will have come to an end.

On the whole, then, is it not more true and just to condemn the national selfishness and ambition and arrogance which drive a country to make a war of aggression, than to concentrate our blame on her breach of international treaties in its conduct? Germany did not, as we should have done, wait till she was *in extremis* before repudiating the contract to which she had set her seal ; but any of us might have been forced to such repudiation had our life depended on it. The violation of Belgian neutrality was the last weight in the scale that determined England to make war ; but some of us are glad to think that she should have made it, even without that compelling argument, to save her French ally from extinction. The brutality with which Belgium was penalized for her most legitimate resistance to an outrage, is, it must be remembered, a second ground of indictment, far more grievous than the violation of her neutrality, but of another order. Germany would seem, indeed, not even to have

granted this neutral country the ordinary rights of a belligerent, but to have disregarded her neutrality in order to pass through her territory, and to have punished her for not being neutral when she resisted the aggression.

But this is, as I have said, another, and a yet more grievous charge than the first, which is the breach of an international treaty. It is with this first one that we are concerned, and, in the eyes of some of us, this breach of international faith was not so grave an international and human crime as the ambition which inspired it—the ambition to wreck that fair land, of higher than German refinement and civilization, that lay on the other side of the Belgian frontier.

France was ever conscious of this menace, of the close neighbourhood of a boastful and violent power that was waiting to destroy her.

> Our pacific people (writes a Frenchman) was already watched by its enemy with a view to its extermination. We were not wholly ignorant of the fact. But what we did not believe, in spite of warnings, was that we were already sapped and mined, perforated, hollowed out, paralysed in our vital centres by a vanguard installed amongst us in time of peace, and concentrating its deadly preparations under the cloak of seeming co-operation. . . . We were betrayed. We were no longer in our own home. They knew us in more detail than we knew ourselves.[1]

[1] "Entretiens des non-combattants," etc.

This vampire-like policy of Germany was her true crime, and not her conduct of the war which it inspired. She has violated treaties more suddenly and shamelessly than some of us would have done; she has set aside conventions for the softening of warfare, when they proved in any way a hindrance to her aims. But, once again, war is war, and, sooner or later, any nation may be reduced to more brutal methods than it first contemplated. Useless atrocities will always be a blot on the name of the country that is guilty of them—such atrocities, if they be not merely the result of the innate savagery of men let loose for destruction, but the deliberate policy of their leaders, cannot be justified even by the essential character of warfare. But, on the whole, the worst is what goes before; the policy of deliberate selfishness that is cherished by a nation that ought to be in the van, and not the rear, of the great world-movement.

Thus I would maintain that, worse than the violation of neutral territory in time of war, is the doctrine that small countries and nationalities have no right to exist, and are the legitimate prey of their stronger neighbours.

Thus Herr Friedrich Naumann writes:—

Even assuming that there had been in Belgium as honourable a sentiment of neutrality as we assume, for example, in Switzerland, the question remains whether a small individual state can, in all possible circumstances, have a right to stand aside from a historical process of reconstruction. Wars to-day are no longer quarrels which are undertaken for the employment of superfluous forces. They are changes of organization in the process of human evolution. . . . As there are some states and people that are rising, and some states and people that are falling, there must be days of reckoning when the shares in the central government of the world are settled afresh. Such a day of reckoning has dawned now. The struggle is about the leadership of mankind. However friendly and sympathetic one's attitude may be towards the wishes of neutrals, one cannot in principle admit their right to stand aside from the general process of centralization in the leadership of humanity. In economics we constantly see small concerns trying to remain outside the syndicates. Often they succeed, but often they do not. The same thing happens also in the sphere of high politics.[1]

If a modern nation, which can claim no excuse on intellectual and practical grounds, which is the peer of others in mental and material achievements, will not march along with them on the line of general human progress, she is convicted of being a clog on the wheel of inter-

[1] Quoted in "The Times," 21 October, 1914, from an article in "Die Hilfe".

national prosperity. We have all sinned, and do yet sin, but the question is—do we want to do better? Is national aggressiveness or international co-operation our last word in international politics?

CHAPTER VI.

PATRIOTISM AND WAR.

Mr. Angell's indictment of war as an economic disaster would possess but little originality if that indictment were not further, and chiefly, directed against the ordinary estimate of the results of war; it is in his theory as to those results that the force and originality of his work consist. The "great illusion" of which he treats is the illusion as to the advantage to any nation of the acquisition of conquered territory; which acquisition is the ordinary consequence of a victorious war. Even the exaction of a war indemnity is, in his mind, an entirely fallacious proceeding; for it is trade which rules the material well-being of the modern world, and the payment of a large sum of money by one country to another is contrary to sound commercial principles. He points out that no country can be annexed without its inhabitants, hence it is they who remain, in spite of any political changes, its true possessors; while the

money extracted from a conquered country will stimulate the conquered to further exertion, while the artificial influx of monetary wealth will damage the trade of the country which absorbs it.

It is not necessary to suppose, as some have done, that because Mr. Angell confined himself to an exposition of the economic argument against war he has no regard for other considerations; yet the commercial factor is undoubtedly the mainspring of his philosophy; while the hostile criticism to which his views have been subjected is, for the most part, not inspired so much by disbelief in the soundness of his data as by indignation at the economic factor being regarded as supreme in such a discussion. Mr. Angell's book, in fact, raises the question as to how far anti-militarism is consistent with patriotism, and whether it be possible to have an end of war until we have an end of separate nations.

It is a pity that this question is not treated more *ex professo* in Mr. Angell's work, for supposing all to agree with him that war is bad from a business point of view, the question still remains as to whether it be bad from the national point of view. Mr. Angell would seem to hold that this is a matter which would not much

signify, because there are, he maintains, stronger bonds of union and deeper lines of cleavage than those constituted by likeness or difference of race and nationality. The question, for him, is not as to what is best for England or Germany, but what is best for Englishmen and Germans.

> Indeed (he writes) where the co-operation between the parts of the social organism is as complete as our mechanical development has recently made it, it is impossible to fix the limits of the community, and to say what is one community and what is another. Certainly the state limits no longer define the limits of the community; and yet it is only the state limits which international antagonism predicates.
>
> There is much closer intercommunication between Britain and the United States in all that touches social and moral development than between Britain and, say, Bengal, part of the same state. An English nobleman has more community of thought and feeling with a European continental aristocrat (will marry his daughter, for instance), than he would think of claiming with such "fellow" British countrymen as a Bengal babu, a Jamaica negro, or even a Dorset yokel. A professor at Oxford will have closer community of feeling with a member of the French Academy than with, say, a Whitechapel publican. (p. 153. 3rd edition.)

It would be better to drop the example of the "Bengal babu" and "Jamaica negro," which introduces the racial, though not the national, distinction, and confine ourselves to the examples of the "Dorset yokel" and the "Whitechapel publican". Here we have the view that intel-

lectual and moral affinities are stronger than national kinship; with the suggested corollary that, in fighting for nationality, we are fighting for an illusion.

It so happens that another book, which was likewise honoured by the award of the Nobel prize, contains the same implicit, though not definitely avowed, or perhaps fully conscious, repudiation of the national factor as a justification of war.

Mr. Angell maintains that not a single Englishman would be the richer for a victory over Germany, nor a single German more prosperous for the defeat of England :—

> Let us assume that at the cost of great sacrifice, the greatest sacrifice which it is possible to imagine a civilized nation making . . . Belgium, Holland and Germany, Switzerland and Austria, have all become part of the great German hegemony, *is there one ordinary German citizen who would be able to say that his well-being had increased by such a change?* (p. 39.)

Baroness von Suttner, on the other hand, who, as a woman, deals with the immediate values of life, and not with its machinery, maintains that not a single individual of either country, conqueror or conquered, is any happier for war; suffering of mind, suffering of heart, suffering of body, are the only true results, against which

may be set off a little satisfied vainglory on the part of the successful soldiers :—

"Yes, we are beaten," sadly repeated my father, as he sank on to the bench.

"So the victims were a needless sacrifice," I sighed.

"Indeed they are to be envied, for they know nothing of the disgrace which has come upon us. But we shall gather ourselves together soon, though they say that peace must now be concluded."

"May God grant it!" I interrupted. "Though it is too late for my poor Arno, yet thousands of others will be spared."

"You seem to think only of your own sorrow, and that of private individuals. This is Austria's affair."

"But is not Austria made up of individuals?" [1]

On the whole it may surely be admitted that the arguments of both writers are sound; that, as individuals, we are not richer or happier for any war; whatever its result may be, our strictly private fortunes remain the same. Yet on the other hand, if both these writers have set aside the national argument, Mr. Angell because he holds that the world is now one huge emporium of buyers and sellers, Baroness von Suttner because it is a vast family of human lives and hearts, it may reasonably be urged against them that they should have made a more definite and detailed profession and defence of their repudia-

[1] "Disarm," Book I, chap. v.

tion of this great factor. Especially in "The Great Illusion," which is a scientific treatise, the omission of the patriotic argument should have been more explicit and not so much an unexpressed consequence of the main thesis of the book.

But if these two writers hold that universal peace is attainable because race and nationality may be regarded as negligible factors, their arguments will only convince those who agree with them on this important point. Those who dispute it may regard their respective theses as admirable and convincing so far as they go, but as incomplete by their neglect of one great factor.

In November, 1859, Giuseppe Mazzini, addressing the youth of Italy, says :—

> Thus does God teach you through history, which is the successive incarnation of His plan, that humanity cannot prevail until every people has won its own land.
>
> The individual cannot hope to achieve, by his feeble capacity, the great aim of universal brotherhood; he must be supported by the strength, the wisdom and the labour of those who share his tongue, his tendencies, his traditions, his civil customs.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The Fatherland is the centre of the balance of which the individual and the nation occupy the two scales.
>
> Each nation has its special mission.[1]

[1] Phrases drawn *passim* from the address "To the Young Men of Italy," November, 1859.

Thus as Mr. Angell would maintain that nationality is unimportant in comparison with material prosperity, Mazzini, on the contrary, held that the first is deserving of the sacrifice of the second.

Just as in the economic sphere, writes Mr. Angell, factors peculiar to our generation have rendered the old analogy as between States and persons a false one, so do these factors render the analogy in the sentimental sphere a false one.

No one thinks of respecting a Russian mujik because he belongs to a great nation, or despising a Scandinavian or Belgian gentleman because he belongs to a small one. (p. 154.)

And again :—

We shall come to realize that the real psychic and moral divisions are not as between nations but as between opposing conceptions of life. (p. 155.)

One of the arguments that Mr. Angell employs to prove the possibility of the entire extinction of war between nations is drawn from the abandonment of religious wars in the modern world. He describes a scene painted by a Spanish artist of the burning of a child for its faith in 1680, and asks :—

How long after that scene . . . was it before the renewal of such became a practical impossibility? It was not a hundred years. Or do those who talk of "unchanging human nature" . . . really plead that we are in danger of a repetition of such a scene? In that case our religious toleration is a mistake.

. . . "Men are savage bloodthirsty creatures, and will fight for a word or a sign," the "Spectator" tells us, when their patriotism is involved. Well, until yesterday it was as true to say that of them when their religion was involved. Patriotism is the religion of politics. . . . But is it likely that a general progress which has transformed religion is going to leave patriotism unaffected? (pp. 310-1.)

There are several objections which may be raised against this argument.

First of all, a return to old methods is more absolutely possible than Mr. Angell believes, and is rendered impracticable more by outside pressure than by a complete conversion of humanity from such methods. In the great Christian Churches persecution is still not only possible, but actual, though it does not openly assume the form of physical torture. A good deal of moral suffering is still inflicted in the name of orthodoxy; and even a certain measure of physical penalty in the form of starvation, as a result of the cutting off of the means of livelihood. And if yet stronger measures are not sometimes adopted this is rather for want of the means than for want of the will.

Secondly, savagery is, in all domains of life, though repressed by advancing civilization, much nearer the surface than Mr. Angell admits. On the whole, it is rather our customs that have

been refined than our nature. The motorist was a terror to his neighbours until motorism was regulated and civilized—a proof that it is not the motorist who is a Christian, but motor traffic which has been Christianized. With the least disturbance of use and wont primitive passions make their presence felt as strongly as ever—religious persecution will not reappear unless, at any moment, religious rulers and enthusiasts are freed from the check of the general system of law and order.

Thirdly, and chiefly, we have to ask how far the subsidence of religious persecution is due to the subsidence of religions themselves, and how far to the progressive civilization of the religious world. It must surely be acknowledged that, to a great extent, there is less religious persecution because there is less religious belief—and that, on the same principle, there would only be less war between nations in proportion as there was less national spirit.

But are we not then admitting Mr. Angell's supposition that the spirit of nationality is one that is to be gradually eliminated with the advance of civilization, and that peace will be an attainable ideal in proportion to its extinction?

So that one of the noblest and most romantic instincts of humanity is to be ruled out of ex-

istence in the world that is to be. Is it to be a choice between patriotism, with the possibility of war, or no patriotism, with the certainty of peace?

Mazzini's ideal was neither of these—for him war was necessary until the ideals of patriotism were attained; but meanwhile it was better to die for one's country than to live without one.

On the whole the ideal of Mazzini is the ideal of those for whom this war is a great human effort, and not a game of political chess; for it is the preservation and freedom of the various nationalities concerned that is, for such, its ultimate aim. If then, to those of us who cherish and uphold the national spirit and glory in our patriotism, it were proved that the ideal of universal peace was incompatible with such love of our country, we might be tempted to accept the sad conclusion that war was, after all, inevitable; that if we wish to remain English we must continue to prepare for war with Germany, and if we wish to remain German we must continue to prepare for war with England. For in spite of our intellectual and spiritual affinities with individuals or classes of other countries, we might still find, in our blood and bones, a something that constituted us English, or German, or Russian, or French; a something that made us feel, in spite of individual friendships, strangers in a

foreign land; a something that urged us home as strength declined, and the evening of life drew on; a something that made our heart beat and our blood course quickly when a national joy or a national sorrow drew our separate consciousness into the united consciousness of our land and our people.

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori; and that because our life is centred in the country for which we would so gladly die. May we not then love our country and also love humanity at large and aim at a future of universal peace?

One thing or the other—patriotism, as the world is at present constituted, must be included in the peace ideal, or that ideal must be abandoned save by those whose hearts have never beat fast in the interest of the land that has protected their youth, developed their manhood, guarded their rights and liberty, shaped their social and political outlook.

How far then is international warfare a necessary corollary of national existence?

If we turn to the German theories on this subject we shall find here good proof of their acknowledged thoroughness; and if that thoroughness err by the omission of the qualifying influences of life as a whole on each section of life, we shall, nevertheless, understand the particular section

better for seeing it treated by special scientific methods.

Here again Germany would seem to be in an earlier stage of social and political development than the other leading races of Europe. She cherishes that national spirit which manifests itself in the fervour of patriotism, but so do we. She defends her national rights by force, and furthers her national aspirations by war; but so do we, and it is absurd to deny it. For her, as for us, physical force is the last appeal in any national crisis; therefore, here again, German patriotism is like any other patriotism. She makes mistakes in matters of justice, and defends her procedure by what we regard as untrue arguments; but in some degree or other we all make mistakes, and defend them by the best reasons we can adduce.

And yet German patriotism is marked by certain characteristics utterly repugnant to the international ethical code as professed by England, France, and other modern countries.

The reason is that German national sentiment is the sentiment of an earlier civilization, which has, on the one hand, been preserved intact from the influence of modern social life, with its fuller sense of humanity as a whole; while it has, on the other hand, been elaborated into a science

and philosophy by the far from backward German intellect. Politically Germany is in a more primitive stage of development than England or France ; intellectually, she is fully their equal, and can defend her political outlook with all the wealth of her intelligence.

And yet, once more, in a sense, she is more right than we are, so far as the actual subject in hand is concerned. Her war is real war, uncoloured by international ethics that should, eventually, do away with war altogether. Her diplomacy is genuine diplomacy ; a determined use of all political methods in the cause of unshamed national egotism. So too, her patriotism is unqualified patriotism ; the national sentiment carried to its extreme limit, without regard for those wider human considerations which are gradually modifying the national sentiment of other lands, and are preparing a spirit of kinship between nations which must eventually profoundly transform the quality of our patriotism. Not all, nor even the majority, of any country are moved by such considerations ; but their presence is felt in the political effort after a higher code of international ethics.

It is a paradoxical, and yet a perfectly natural result, of the fact that Germany cherishes a fiercer and more unqualified patriotism than the rest of

us, that she is the enemy of the national sentiment of other countries and races. For as every living religion seeks converts and, when it ceases to do so, has ceased, to some extent, to believe in itself, so every country that cherishes certain national ideals will seek to win converts to them. Germany believes in herself, and therefore she wants others to believe in her; and, being in the more primitive stage of political development, her method of making others believe in her is to knock them down until they do.

Legally and socially, writes Bernhardi, all denominations enjoy equal rights, but the German state must never renounce the leadership in the domain of free spiritual development. To do so would mean loss of prestige.[1]

Hence follow two contradictory results—first, that Germany is the enemy of national sentiment and patriotism because she has so much of them herself; secondly, that she is more backward than countries that are actually less advanced in general civilization just because of her high intellectual development.

As to the first point, we charge her with such an overflow of German feeling and German aspirations, that she is blunt to French, and Serbian, and Polish, as well as English feelings and aspirations.

[1] "Germany and the Next War," pp. 75-6.

As to the second point, she is so entirely equal in mental development and intellectual achievements to the best of other European races, that she is able to make a philosophy of barbarism, and to set out on a campaign of aggression in order to impose her own advantages on others, whether they want them or not. As in the Middle Ages Spanish soldiers set forth to conquer savage races inspired by a religious ideal as well as greed and self-interest; as they imposed the Christian faith, along with the Spanish dominion on the countries they had quelled and devastated, so Germany has aimed at giving all the world a share in her *Kultur* in return for their acceptance of her rule. If they do not see what is best for them, she will open their eyes in her own way.

It is this characteristic of German policy of which French thinkers have been conscious, deeply conscious, long before we were fully aware of it. They had had experience of German methods, and they knew, not only what Germany had done, but what she was yet prepared to do.

Thus a French professor addressing the German nation writes in the "Entretiens":—

We French detest in you an evil of which you may perhaps be cured, but of which you are undoubtedly guilty, an evil of

which we ourselves have had some experience, thanks to Louvois and Bonaparte: the evil of a self-centred will drunk with good fortune; the evil ambition to pursue sterile enterprises by brutal methods; the evil stupidity of not being able to imagine that anybody else exists, or that, existing, they have any rights; the evil blindness of pushing cherished principles to an extreme without having examined them. We French intend therefore to conquer you, definitely and without illusion, and to convince you.

. . . . . .

We have no design of wickedly and foolishly exterminating a people much more numerous than ourselves; a people with many good amongst them; a people not lacking in great philologists; a people of musicians, and more gifted than ourselves in music. . . . We do not desire your blood. Neither do we desire your lands, we only need our own and the restoration of our separated and captive countrymen. But we do intend to beat the persistency of our enemy, to force him, by defeat, to renunciation, and thereby to comprehension. We must, in the old French words, force him to "recreire"[1] (cry off!).

Or else—die ourselves!

Mazzini saw that each nation had to make its contribution to the spiritual and material wealth of the whole human family. The question is in what way that contribution is to be made. The modern world, which is, in its highest repre-

[1] From "Entretiens des non-combattants durant la guerre," Union pour la Vérité, 21, rue Visconti, Paris.

"jusqu'il seit morz o tut vifs recréant."

sentatives, seeking an interchange of national values and influences which shall be to the common good of all, strives for a fuller international life that shall preserve and perpetuate, and yet harmonize, the separate forms of national life in one great whole. The German, or more primitive political world, seeks her expansion by the elimination of other national factors and the supremacy of her own. In both cases political amity is the ideal, but in the case of Germany patriotism is to be supreme, in the case of the modern world patriotism is to be a factor of the whole. German patriotism is patriotism and nothing else; modern patriotism is patriotism in process of transformation to a wider human ideal.

The mediaeval patriotism, of which Germany furnishes an example, and of which something yet lives in every nation, will ever need, at recurring periods, to prove itself by war. Through patriotism the citizen lives in the heart of his country. So long as that heart beats but for itself, the love of one's country will imply, as occasion arises, the hatred of other countries. Even a peaceable contribution to the life of the world may demand a domination of spiritual influence, if not of physical force.

If, at long last, mankind become in truth one

vast family, we cannot now foresee what changes may, by then, have been wrought in the character of national life ; nor how far strictly national sentiment will survive at all. We cannot work for ideals that are beyond our powers of conception ; and meanwhile patriotism is an essential element of political life, though the patriotism of the dawn is already tempered by wider human influences. The goal to which the best elements of the modern political world are tending, is that of Mazzini—an international commonwealth in which the love of each man for his own country will be his most definite expression of his love for all the nations of the world. This is the higher patriotism, which is already something more, something greater, than undiluted patriotism. As Mazzini tells us, we may have to fight in the interests of this narrower patriotism until we have reached one that is more universal. Only then will the love of our nearest be compatible with the love of our farthest, and international anthems with patriotic hymns.

CHAPTER VII.

DEMOCRACY AND WAR.

BEFORE the outbreak of this war it was thought by some, though not by those most intimately acquainted with German political life, that the Socialist party in Germany would offer powerful opposition to it. Such hopes proved vain.

Socialists have fought and fallen on both sides: and have declared that it was for the cause they professed that they fought and fell. A small section has stood aloft, but its influence has been null. How could it be otherwise? How could a party that was deeply rooted in the life of a nation cut itself off from all share in the life of that nation?

On the other hand there has been in this country, as also in Russia, a very marked expression of hope that this war will advance the cause of an enlightened socialism.

In his speech at the Queen's Hall on 19 September, 1914, Mr. Lloyd George said:—

We are not fighting the German people. The German people are just as much under the heel of this Prussian military caste, and more so, thank God, than any other nation in Europe. It will be a day of rejoicing for the German peasant and artisan and trader when the military caste is broken.

. . . . . .

There is another blessing infinitely greater and more enduring, which is emerging already out of this great contest—a new patriotism richer, nobler, more exalted than the old. I see a new recognition amongst all classes high and low, shedding themselves of selfishness—a new recognition that the honour of a country does not depend merely upon the maintenance of its glory in the stricken field, but in protecting its homes from distress as well. It is a new patriotism which is bringing a new outlook over all classes. The great flood of luxury and of sloth which had submerged the land is receding, and a new Britain is appearing. We can see, for the first time, the fundamental things that matter in life, and that had been obscured from our vision by tropical growth of prosperity.

May I tell you in a simple parable what I think this war is doing for us? I know a valley in the North of Wales between the mountains and the sea—a beautiful valley, snug, comfortable, sheltered by the mountains from all the bitter blast. It was very enervating, and I remember how the boys were in the habit of climbing the hill above the village to have a glimpse of the great mountains in the distance, and to be stimulated and freshened by the breezes which came from the hill-tops, and by the great spectacle of that valley. We have been living in a sheltered valley for generations. We have been too comfortable, too indulgent, many, perhaps, too selfish, and the stern hand of fate has scourged

us to an elevation where we can see the great everlasting things that matter for a nation—the great peaks of honour we had forgotten—Duty, Patriotism, and—clad in glittering white—the great pinnacle of Sacrifice, pointing like a rugged finger to Heaven. We shall descend into the valleys again, but as long as the men and women of this generation last they will carry in their hearts the image of these great mountain peaks, whose foundations are not shaken though Europe rock and sway in the convulsions of a great war.

From Russia came the following letter, addressed by Prince Kropotkin to Mr. T. Fisher Unwin :—

You saw, I suppose, my friend Bourtzeff's letter to "The Times" of September 18. Apart from the sentence where he says that all parties are at one with the Government, this letter expresses, I should say, the opinion of most of those who have always fought for freedom in Russia. Most of us feel that Russia is now living through a moment which will be the turning point in her political development. Not only will the Russian Government see itself bound to make some small concessions to the demands of liberty which come from all layers of society, such as it has already begun to make, but, after the remarkably united action of all classes of society, parties, and nationalities for the defence of Russia, more important concessions and much deeper changes are bound to follow, whatever the issue of the war may be.

True, the old habits and conceptions of the rulers of Russia are so deeply rooted that up till now a general amnesty has not yet been granted, and the thousands of exiles, scattered in the North of Russia and Siberia, have not yet received the right of returning to their homes, notwithstand-

ing the demands already made in this sense by some of the Liberal organs of the Russian Press.

True also that, apart from the law passed by the Duma and the Council of the State in their sittings before the war, which law grants to all the non-Russian inhabitants of the Empire the right of opening their own primary, intermediary, and higher schools, with teaching in their own languages, after having made a simple declaration to the authorities to this effect, there are yet no signs of relaxation of the prosecutions that have hitherto been directed against the non-Russian populations of the Empire. But, just as all over Europe, with the exception of Germany, there grows a feeling about the necessity of re-modelling the map of Europe in conformity with the demands of independence of the smaller nationalities, so also within Russia grows the idea that the autonomy of the different nationalities of the Empire will have to be recognized, after the wonderful readiness displayed by them to support Russia in her fight against Germany and Austria.

It is generally understood that, if the promises given to the Poles by the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army remained a dead letter, such a breach of faith would create, not only in Poland, but also in Finland and the Caucasus, dangerous conditions of serious resentment and discontent. It is remarkable how the feelings I speak of are general all over Russia, as well as in the countries where there are Russian refugees.

A still more striking feature of the present day is that a similar feeling is spread all over Europe. Everywhere on the Continent the thought is expressed that "this war must be the last one"; that it must be "the end of the period of general armaments we have lived through"; and that the institutions under which Europe has hitherto lived have seriously to be

revised. And when we see the horrors accompanying the present war, and the abominations to which the Bismarckian contempt of international treaties and obligations and militarist education have brought Germany, we cannot but feel certain that German militarism cannot be victorious. When it has been defeated by the common efforts of all nations, Europe is sure to enter a period of evolution which will be the negation of those principles that have plunged our civilization into the murderous struggles of the present day.

There is a two fold hope which emerges from these utterances ; first, the hope that in this war is to be laid the foundation of a more genuine and lasting peace between nations ; secondly, that it is also to prepare a yet more intimate peace between classes—or, rather, their obliteration in so far as they stand for a conflict of interests and a struggle to exploit one element of society in the interest of another.

We were mistaken in our belief as to the influence and action of Socialism before the war ; are we cherishing kindred illusions as to the influence of the democratic spirit after the war ?

The immediate influence of the war has certainly been in the direction of those hopes. Never have opposed schools of political thought had so excellent an opportunity of understanding and learning from one another ; never has there

been a warmer and more living fusion of parties and classes.

The war has imposed on all of us the duty of social service ; of supporting the community by which our personal interests are protected, and in which they are rooted.

It has also taught us sobriety of life—how to do without many of its vain and useless accompaniments. It has furthermore made us realize that it is not enough to be in the right, we must also be strong and self-sacrificing in the defence of right.

Lastly, it has taught us the value of union, and that such union cannot exist without discipline, and without a strong and clean government.

This war has given us another grave lesson in bringing to light the existence of a bottom-most layer of society in which it was difficult to kindle any keen sense of patriotism. This is a state of things *qui donne furieusement à penser*, and to the conservative rather than to the socialist, who was not only aware of the existence of such a class, but also of the reason for its existence. No one is unpatriotic who feels that his own life, and that of his family, is rooted in the life of the country from which it draws its sustenance. If the arterial system of a country is not strong enough to pump the blood to its extremities,

those extremities will be inevitably lacking in patriotic sacrifice and sentiment. Therefore, if certain classes of our community manifest genuine indifference in time of national danger, this must be either in virtue of their ignorance or because they feel they have no stake in the country, and would be unaffected by its greatest changes. In either case there is proof of an unsatisfactory condition of things, and one which the present mutual understanding of political parties should help to remedy. The whole country should blush for its unpatriotic elements, and not only those classes in which such elements exist. If a portion of the people are lacking in public spirit such a fact may be used to prove not only their own unfitness for taking a part in national life, but still more the inadequacy of the methods by which they are instructed and governed.

And yet all these lessons may be lost as easily as they were gained unless a strong and persistent effort be made to apply them when the crisis is past. This war may be a step towards the eventual elimination of war from international life, but it might also be the preparation for many more wars. And so, too, the present mutual understanding of classes and parties might be lost and forgotten and the old struggle for superiority return in all its force.

Just as the existence of separate nationalities has for its result the possibility of international war until the good of each one comes to be recognized as the good of all, and the good of all as the good of each one ; so the existence of distinct classes of society has for its result the possibility of internal, though bloodless warfare, until, in like manner, the good of each class is recognized as the good of all society.

War has not permanently effaced our differences, but it has given us a magnificent occasion of solving them by mutual understanding ; and it has taught us that effort, strong and sustained, bloody or bloodless, of sword or of spirit, is needed for the prosecution or attainment of any ideal.

If socialism was not potent to avert this world-wide catastrophe, this was not only because of the fatality of war nor because of the futility of a paper pacificism—even had war been politically avoidable socialism must have failed because the form of socialism with which we are acquainted has not been as wide as humanity in its aims. It has educated the people to a sense of their needs and of their rights ; it has not yet taught them to interest themselves in the highest welfare of the whole world. Their representatives have fought for the advancement of one class ; they

have not fought for an idea of justice which should be common to all classes.

Socialism might well learn a modified lesson from Germany, with her lust for world dominion. Its ambitions have been too narrow, its methods too one-sided; it cannot hope to influence the whole world until it loves the whole world. The democratic party has complained of the existence of secret treaties unknown to the people that would have to pay the price of their fulfilment; but what has it done to fit itself for being entrusted with such secrets? It has not only been ignorant, it has likewise been indifferent to the vast questions of international life, to its huge and complicated problems, and has thought they might be met by the utterance of a little cheap sentiment, while to economic questions, in which the working classes were interested, it has devoted the best of its brains and abilities. We cannot expect to handle things unless we take the trouble to hold them, or accept the labour of carrying them—responsibility must be accepted with its burdens as well as its rights. Who would seriously trust the wheel of the state to men who have never explored the ocean, beset with rocks and dangers, through which it has to be guided? On the whole all classes can exercise political influence in the matters in which they are interested; but

their interest must be a serious and intelligent one.

We really have (says a recent writer), if we care to use it, as much democratic control over the Foreign Office under our constitution as over any Government department, for the Foreign Office, like every other department, is under the control of a member of Parliament, elected by the people. But we are more interested in social reform, in labour legislation, and in constitutional reform, than in foreign politics; and so it is on questions of home policy that we make and unmake Governments.[1]

But those questions of Foreign policy cannot be adequately treated from a purely party or class standpoint; and this is why those Labour leaders who have meddled with them have too often proved their inadequacy, and given grounds for the belief that democracy has no world-wide mission.

On the whole the heart of the people is sound and its conscience is just. During the present war some of us may have heard wider and juster judgments from the mouths of the working class than from those of the educated. But the *vox populi vox Dei* dictum is misleading in its choice of the word *voice*, for collectively the people have an unclear thought and an inefficient power of expression. They are not so often right in what

[1] "The War and Democracy," Chap. VI. pp. 231-2.

they clearly say as in what they unclearly think and feel.

Now every government is in some sense at the tail end of progress; it is there to guard and enforce the good that has been attained, and it has little heed for what is merely attainable. The official world is never the best world, whatever individual statesmen may be; it is at most the average world, and often not even that. Every office, though established for the general interest, comes to exist in great measure for its own; it is therefore incapable of progress or self-reform. Kings will not end the abuses of the crown; soldiers will not lessen the evils of militarism; diplomats will not reform diplomacy; leaders will not strip their own cause of its vices and egotism.

Thus Democracy, in face of this world-wide catastrophe, should have learned something of its own inadequacies. When the crisis came it could not rise above its own level, and that level, as established by the parties that represented it, was not a high one. They were well equipped for dealing with labour complications; they had not trained themselves by the study of world-wide problems. The Socialist party, like every other party, was representative, in fact, of the average and not of the best.

The Germans have sought world-dominion, but they have not obtained it, because they sought to Germanize and not to humanize the world. The Democracy could not prevent this war because its ambitions have been confined to the welfare of one class.

CHAPTER VIII.

DIVINE NEUTRALITY.

SHOULD God, in time of war, be addressed and regarded as a neutral power, as the Father of all mankind, not more desirous for the victory of one side than of another, willing only the eventual good of both; or should we implore Him frankly and uncompromisingly to take part with us, and aid us to confound our enemies? Should we point out to Him the justice of our own cause and the perfidy of our opponents, as both sides have done in their relations with the United States; should we even go further still, and assume as an obvious proposition that God is with us and against our enemies; or should we, on the contrary, respect Divine Neutrality and temper our prayers in accordance with it?

First of all let it be noted that, so far from war tending to quench the instinct to pray, it has at present, as it has usually had in the past, a directly opposite effect.

It may be safely said that in England and

Germany, both mainly Protestant in their creed, as in France, whose people, though not their Government, are chiefly Catholic, and Russia, the land of Orthodox Christianity, the churches have been better filled this year than in times of peace. We are all praying and, singular to say, we are all praying, as we believe, to the same God.

It is interesting, however, to note that some are conscious of the paradox, while others are not; and that the character of the prayers offered varies according to the presence or absence of this consciousness. We have, thus, two very distinct categories of prayer, and those categories are quite irrespective of the international division. We have, on the one side, the Old Testament type of prayer, definite and uncompromising; an appeal to the God of armies to place His strong right hand at the disposition of our forces. We have, on the other side, a more qualified supplication; an appeal for help, along with an admission that God may take some interest in our enemies as well as ourselves.

Germany has certainly distinguished herself in the production of the more uncompromising type of prayer, though others have not been far behind.

In his proclamation of 6 August, 1914, the Kaiser exclaims :—

To be, or not to be, is the question for the Empire which our fathers founded. To be, or not to be, German power and German existence. We shall resist to the last breath of man and horse, and shall fight out the struggle even against a world of enemies. Never has Germany been subdued when it was united. Forward with God, Who will be with us as He was with our ancestors.

Nor has he ever omitted a prayerful allusion in the various utterances which have reached us. He has ever confidently proclaimed his entire trust in Divine pro-Germanism, and ended his addresses with a pious acknowledgment of the same.

In the "Militärwochenblatt" of Berlin, 4 August, we read :—

If there be a God in Heaven, and there is, we may count on the victory of the just cause of our German arms.

The Emperor of Austria ended his proclamation of 28 July, 1914, with the following words :—

I trust in the Omnipotent God, Who will render my armies victorious.

At the outbreak of war the Tsar of Russia prayed with his own soldiers in the hall of the Winter Palace, and a few days later addressed the Duma in the same place, ending with the impassioned cry :—

Great is the God of the Russian Land!

Later on he replied to the patriotic addresses offered him in the Kremlin, and ended his speech with the following words:—

I send a warm greeting to my gallant troops and to our brave Allies, who are making common cause with us to safeguard the downtrodden principles of peace and truth. *May God be with us!*

The proceedings were closed by a *Te Deum* at the Uspensky Cathedral.

In the Old Testament we find the classic models of this form of prayer.

Thus the Psalmist prays[1]:—

I will pursue after my enemies, and overtake them; and I will not turn again till they are consumed.

I will break them, and they shall not be able to stand; they shall fall under my feet.

And thou hast girded me with strength unto battle; and hast subdued under me them that rose up against me.

And thou hast made my enemies turn their back upon me, and hast destroyed them that hated me. They cried but there was none to save them, to the Lord, *but he heard them not.*

In the Books of the Maccabees we get a certain difference of character, for in those books we have the story of a struggle for the preservation of nationality, while the Psalms are more suggestive of a war of conquest. The Maccabees are fight-

[1] Ps. XVII.—Douay Bible.

ing *pro aris et focis*, for sheer self-preservation; they are the Belgians of our present contest.

> And now let us cry to Heaven (says Judas Maccabaeus) and the Lord will have mercy on us, and will remember the covenant of our fathers, and will destroy this army before our face this day;
>
> And all nations shall know that there is one that redeemeth and delivereth Israel.

Yet in this, as in the former instance, there is the same note of assurance that God is on their side; the same expression of certainty that they have only to do their duty to Him, and that He will then undertake all responsibility for their cause.

To turn now to the prayers of the Roman Catholic Church, we find, in the "Mass in time of war," the following collect:—

> O God Who dost make war to cease, crushing by the might of Thy strong defence the foes of them that put their trust in Thee; succour us Thy servants who entreat Thy mercy, and break down the savage power of our enemies, that with increasing thanksgiving we may give praise to Thee.

This collect is not, of course, of recent composition, and need not therefore be a direct reflection of the present mind of the Church; for this we should have to turn to the unprinted, unpublished prayers of individuals. Its spirit is, in some respects, as uncompromising as that of

the Kaiser; it is a prayer for protection against the wicked assaults of an unjust enemy. Yet, on the other hand, it clearly presupposes that those using it are the attacked and not the attackers; it contains not the faintest suggestion of the conquering spirit. We imagine it composed for a country like Belgium, the victim of a direct, ferocious, and unprovoked invasion.

When we turn to the consideration of the prayers in use in the Church of England we are at once aware of a difference in tone, reflective of the social and religious progress of the last century. The petitions are not so uncompromising, and they evince a certain regard for Divine neutrality. The "Form of Intercession" includes certain psalms and readings, not of as militarist a character as might easily have been selected, and after the Lord's Prayer the prayers of the people are asked as follows :—

For the King and all in authority, the sailors and soldiers, the sick and wounded, and those who minister to them, for those in anxiety and sorrow, and those in poverty and need, and lastly, "that the present distress may be overruled for the advancement of God's Kingdom".

The prayer for the sailors and soldiers is as follows :—

O Almighty Lord God, the Father and Protector of all that trust in Thee, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness

the men who through perils of war are serving this nation; beseeching Thee to take into Thine own hand both them and the cause wherein their King and country send them. Be Thou their strength when they are set in the midst of so many and great dangers. Make all bold through death or life to put their trust in Thee, Who art the only giver of victory and canst save by many or by few; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In "The Times" of 21 August, 1914, the following letter appeared, suggesting a form of intercession for the Navy :—

PRAYER FOR OUR SAILORS.

The officers and men of our Navy have always held a warm place in the affections of the British people, and I know there are many who are now daily offering up special intercessions for Divine protection and help for our ships at sea. But we want as many of our countrymen as possible to intercede for us at this anxious time, and I am therefore suggesting the following prayer as most suitable for our needs, in the great hope that all who read it will help us by making use of it in their daily devotions. It is a slight modification of the beautiful prayer from our Prayer Book which is used in the Navy every day; and part of the prayer used by Nelson before going into action at the Battle of Trafalgar is embodied.

It is one of the splendid traditions of the Navy that, before going into action, officers and men have joined in special united prayer asking God to help them in fighting for their country and a just cause. It will be a great help to our officers and men to know that, during the trying time of possible waiting and when the supreme moment of

going into action comes, they are in the thought and prayers of their fellow-countrymen.

PRAYER FOR THE NAVY.

O Eternal Lord God, Who alone spreadest out the heavens and rulest the raging of the sea; Who hast compassed the waters with bounds until day and night come to an end; be pleased to receive into Thy almighty and most gracious protection the persons of Thy servants the officers and men of our Navy and the Fleets in which they serve. Preserve them from the dangers of the sea and from the violence of the enemy, that they may be a safeguard unto our most gracious Sovereign Lord, King George, and his dominions. O Great God, Whom we worship, grant to our country, and for the benefit of Europe in general, a great and glorious victory, and may humanity after victory be the predominant feature in the British Fleet. Vouchsafe to those who lay down their lives for their country Thy Eternal Rest. Amen.

H. S. WOOD, *Archdeacon,*
Chaplain of the Fleet.

This prayer expresses a distinct longing for victory, yet so tempered by other sentiments that one feels it is addressed, not only to the God of England, but to the God of all the world.

Another little Navy prayer was sent to his betrothed by one of the victims of the "Pathfinder":—

Heavenly Father, forgive my sins and strengthen me in all that is right; grant me help to carry out my duties faithfully and bravely; bless and protect the officers and

men of this ship; shield all I love from harm in my absence, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Of private prayers which have come under the notice of the present writer, may be mentioned particularly the "Hour at the Front," by the Rev. Ronald Knox, of Trinity College, Oxford, of which the following lines may be selected as characteristic of the whole:—

Commend your country to the care of God *simply because it is your country.*

And:—

Pray . . . that the war may be finished and victory secured with as little suffering as possible; by sinking of ships rather than men, by the fall of fortresses rather than of their defenders, etc.

The following is an unpublished prayer, composed for family devotions by a Roman Catholic:—

Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people!

Mercifully grant, O Lord, to our countrymen who are fighting for those of us who cannot fight, that they may be brave in battle, courageous in defeat, gentle in victory. May their labours and sufferings in our cause purify their own souls and bring them closer to Thee. May this war regenerate the whole world and those who take part in it. May it free us from self-indulgent habits, and make us more generous in the service of others. May it draw rich and poor into one brotherhood and extinguish class hatred. May it lead us, through much pain and sorrow, to a true and

lasting peace. May we fight without hatred and at last lay down our arms without bitterness. Protect our soldiers in the midst of moral as well as physical danger. Have pity on our enemies as well as our friends, and unite us at length in peace and brotherhood. May Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven, and may we all assist in the doing of it. May we love and serve Thee in good or in evil fortune, and may our trial, in Thy mercy, be quickly ended.

Give us peace, O Lord, in this our day.

This prayer is obviously composed by one who would have fought to win and who would gladly have prayed to win, but who was deterred from any form of unqualified petition by a sense of reverence for the universal Fatherhood of God.

Paradoxical, then, as it might seem to inhabitants of a neighbouring planet, were there such in a position to observe us, we are all praying; Protestant Germany and Catholic Austria, Protestant England and Catholic France and Orthodox Russia; and not only are we all praying, but, as already observed, we all claim to be praying to the same God.

Here is an inconsistency of which the opposed armies of pre-Christian times were not guilty; for then, though all, like we in our own day, prayed, they did not profess to pray to the same God: each side prayed to its own God. Indeed, warfare was, in those days, not only for home and country, but for temple and altar; the success

of one people over another was the success of the God of that people over the God of its enemies. Rightly did each side invoke its God, for on its victory depended the honour of that God. Even the Jews, though they escaped Polytheism, had to pass through Monolatry, or the worship of God as the God of a people, to Monotheism, or the worship of God as a God of the universe. In his study of the "Religion of Israel," M. Loisy describes to us the Jewish transition from tribal to universal religion. There was a time when Jahveh was a God

owning a name, like his neighbour gods, and having like them, too, a people to watch over,

but was nevertheless

a definite and limited God, very powerful, no doubt, within His own sphere of action, and working marvels in the interest of His worshippers, but still a God amongst other gods, though undoubtedly the strongest, the greatest, and perhaps already the best. . . .

"Let Yahweh arise, and let his enemies be scattered,
Let them also which hate him flee before him!"

Such was the battle hymn with which the ark of Shiloh was greeted, when the armies of Israel moved against the enemy. And when they halted, to encamp after the battle :—

"Halt! Yahweh,
With the battalions of Israel!"

On these occasions Yahweh fought for his people less ostentatiously than the Homeric gods, but just as the god

Ashur did with the Assyrians and Ammon of Thebes with Rameses. At Gibeon he killed more enemies with his hail-stones than the warriors of Israel did with their swords.[1]

Such prayer was suitable to the Jew of those days, but is it fitting to the Christian of our own times?

May we not say that the deep line of cleavage which exists between the two categories of prayers above described is, in fact, a line of cleavage between a religion of monolatry and a religion of monotheism; and that pro-German and pro-Austrian prayers for victory are a survival of other forms of religion not properly belonging to monotheistic Christianity. Put such prayer into paraphrase and the contradiction will be obvious.

Thus :—

O Father of all mankind, strengthen our right hand for the destruction of our enemies, Thy children! Uphold this country, whose God Thou art, and humble that other country, whose God Thou likewise art! We will honour Thee by our victory, and may our enemies honour Thee by their defeat! May we be sanctified by success, and may they be sanctified by humiliation. May Thy Will be done, and may that Will be the glorification of Germany? Russia? etc.

And yet can we, any of us, avoid this contradiction without giving up every form of

[1] "The Religion of Israel," by Alfred Loisy, translated by Arthur Galton, pp. 100, 111, 112.

prayer? Is it possible to pray disinterestedly when the whole future of our country, and the lives of those dear to us, depend on a certain issue of the struggle? To what conclusion does this inevitable inconsistency lead us?

To what other conclusion than that the religion of war is more or less irresistibly a religion of monolatry, of tribal religion, of denial of the universal Fatherhood of God? From this conclusion there is no escape. Not only has war no true place in the scheme of Christianity, but it has, still less, any true place in the scheme of monotheism.

We must accept it, then, as one of the contradictions of a state of war, that we cannot pray without some treason, either to our monotheistic beliefs, or to our patriotic sentiments. It is an impasse from which there is no escape until international politics have been shaped in accordance with our highest human religion and morality. We cannot uphold the universal Fatherhood of God without admitting, as its corollary, the universal brotherhood of mankind; yet how are we to combine the two in time of war?

There is only one answer to the difficulty, and that is to combine them in time of peace. War has become a monstrosity, while it yet remains a

necessity. It is a monstrosity, because it is absolutely uncombinable with the laws of our own highest life, and follows a code of its own. Yet it is not in itself the cause, but rather the result, of that ego-centric national spirit which cannot love without hating, nor labour without competing, nor cherish its own life without seeking to absorb that of others; of that nationalism that cannot yet greet the coming of another race with the words—

Ecco chi crescerà i nostri amori!

CHAPTER IX.

PHILOSOPHICAL NEUTRALITY.

At an early stage of the war a notable event occurred: an event which may have made but little general impression, but which was, nevertheless, highly significant in the thinking world. A large majority of German professors followed the military example—and as the Kaiser and lesser dignitaries had returned their honorary commissions in the English army, so the philosophers of Germany returned their honorary degrees in English universities. To some of us this was a cause of frank astonishment, though later developments enabled us to understand it better. What had learned degrees to do with war? Were philosophical problems to be decided by the sword?

Some few German professors protested against the movement, but their objections were overruled, and even Dr. Hans Richter, the idol of the English musical public, thought that German music must utter its protest, and returned his degree politely but firmly.

After this came the uncompromising manifesto of the German professors, with its unconditional declaration of solidarity, not only with the German military cause, but with every detail of the conduct and methods of the German military campaign, including the reprisals of the soldiery on the civilians and peasantry of Belgium, and the burning of Louvain university and library. This manifesto also definitely declares that German "culture" depends, for its existence, on German militarism.

To quote one or two paragraphs :—

It is not true that the life and property of a single Belgian citizen has been touched by our soldiers except when the bitterest necessity for self-defence rendered it unavoidable. . . .

The paragraph dealing with Louvain begins :—

It is not true that our troops raged like brutes in Louvain. With heavy hearts they were obliged to take reprisals against a furious population by bombarding a portion of the town.

The last section runs :—

It is not true that the fight against our so-called militarism is not, as our enemies hypocritically aver, a fight against our culture. Without German militarism German culture would long ago have been swept off the face of the earth. . . .[1]

Previous to these collective utterances a dis-

[1] From "The Times," 8 October, 1914.

tinguished German philosopher, who had exercised no small influence on the thinking world in England as elsewhere, had prepared us, in some degree, for this new conception of learning as an appendage of militarism. And this was one of the philosophers from whom it was least to be expected, not because of his personal acquaintance with England, but because his work was of the character which would be described as exclusively philosophical, and nothing else. Dr. Rudolf Eucken has not, like Professor Harnack and others, devoted himself to critical and historical labours, but has dealt with the over- and underlying truths of life, and has been the protagonist of a spiritual conception thereof. "*Der Kampf um einen geistigen Lebensinhalt*"—"The struggle for the spiritualization of Life"—this is the work by which some of us know him best, and its title is descriptive of its author's outlook. The whole burden of that book lies in its insistence on the need of passing through life, in its surface and average presentment,[1] with its triviality, its partizanship, its inconstancy, its shallowness to life in its deepest and most spiritual reality.

To apprehend his point of view we need not search any of his works for special passages; we

[1] "Durchschnittsleben."

need only open them at haphazard and take those that present themselves. Thus, speaking of the eternal conflict of freedom and necessity, he writes :—

There is no other way of salvation than to lift ourselves above the region of conflict; this world of mutual opposition cannot be accepted as the last and only one; the impasse cannot represent the full depth and reality of life, if we are to preserve the will and the strength to live. Hence arises an insistent question whether there be not some activity of reason beyond the entanglement, and whether we cannot invariably inhabit that higher region, and from its vantage point attack the contradiction.[1]

Earlier in the same work he speaks of

the sharp contrast between life in its philosophical and its superficial meaning; what is self-evident to the former is a problem to the latter, the first principles of the former are folly and exaggeration to the latter.[2]

And in another place he uncompromisingly declares that the state is inadequate to the fulfilment of the spiritual ideals of mankind :—

The state can only consider and maintain the common level of spiritual life, not its wider and more spontaneous experiences; it is closely entangled with the necessities of life and cannot act save through their influence; it is moved by the change and movement of time, and even by the fluctuations of the moment; with its huge forces it becomes the battlefield of violent passions and interests, it can never

[1] Op. cit. p. 267. [2] *Idem*, p. 39.

suffice for the attainment of the inward and eternal aims of mankind.[1]

The *Durchschnittsleben*, the *surface* or *average* field of life of Professor Eucken, is the world of material necessities, and of action and thought guided by those necessities. In this world there exists, indeed, a certain form of freedom, but it is a strictly conditioned freedom. Our body is free, but only within the domain of physiological law; our mind also is free, but within the laws of its imprisoned condition. So, too, society is free, but only in the measure of its own cultural development, and the limits of that development cannot be suddenly broken through at will, but only by a general movement of progress.

In his spiritual life, on the other hand, man reaches into a realm of complete freedom, in which each action is a new attainment, and not merely a modification of something that is already there. For Eucken, as for Bergson, the spirit is a creative agency.

Now whatever our national sympathies, and whatever our political opinions, we must all admit that the world in which men fight for goods of a limited and material order, whether it be a struggle between labour and capital, or a war between nation and nation, is a world of at least partial

[1] Op. cit. p. 331.

necessity, and only restrained and conditioned freedom. Indeed, every mass movement of mankind suffers under the same limitation. One man may move and act in complete freedom; many men together cannot do so.

Even if we were to adopt as our ultimate philosophy one of physical well-being, we are still constrained to raise our ideals above the general press of human life; to admit that the average life lies under a law of necessity which prohibits its common pursuit of that which the single mind can recognize as best.

We are therefore compelled to the conclusion that philosophy can deal with the general questions of war and peace, and with the underlying principles of political life; but that to throw its weight into one side or the other in the practical details and methods of the concrete actions that result from those principles, is to cease to be philosophy, and to compromise its own value and influence.

So much for philosophy—and now what about the philosopher? Is he to be a bloodless being of abstract views? or is he to live the human life of those around him?

Obviously we do not want an English philosopher to be pro-German, or a German philosopher to be pro-English. Nor do we want any philosopher to shirk military service, if he be fit

for it; or to neglect any duty he may be able to render for the good of his country. Nor should we resent his giving vent to any, the most energetic, utterances as a German or an Englishman in favour of his people and their cause.

But, in the name of philosophy, we have a right to ask one thing, and that is that philosophy be not turned into politics, whether social or national; and that the all-embracing ideals of humanity, in its spiritual and eternal character, be not compromised by an attempt to entangle them with the conduct and methods of a struggle which, however terrible, is a passing one.

Furthermore, we have a right to ask of the philosopher that, even in war time, when the lesser members of society may be excused for losing their heads, he should show himself worthy of his profession by keeping his own, and that we should feel, in his treatment of the subject, that he regards it not only from the point of view of his own nation but from a more remote standpoint; that he should occupy a position from which not one side only, but the whole, can be at least dimly apprehended; from which he may behold, indeed, a war of principles, with which philosophy is concerned, but from which he can also behold a huge tangle of right and wrong, and the

pitiful struggles of humanity to break the meshes of its captivity.

Such a view will not preclude the possibility of one side being mainly in the right and the other mainly in the wrong—but it will embrace the whole subject under a wider, more universally human aspect.

Expectations such as these were doomed to disappointment. First of all, those for whom Professor Eucken had been one of the great spiritual teachers of our modern world, had to bear the brunt of an uncompromising pronouncement of opinion in which he was joined by Professor Häckel. In the "Vossische Zeitung" of 20 August, these two philosophers published an unqualified condemnation of their adversaries, and an equally unqualified assertion of the righteousness of the German cause :—

> What is happening to-day will be inscribed in the annals of history as an indelible shame to England. England fights to please a half-Asiatic Power against Germanism. She fights not only on the side of barbarism, but also of moral injustice, for it is not to be forgotten that Russia began the war because it was not willing that there should be a thorough expiation of a wretched murder.
>
> It is the fault of England that the present war is extended to a world-war, and that all culture is thereby endangered. And why all this ? Because she was envious of Germany's greatness, because she wished at all costs to hinder a further

extension of this greatness. She was only waiting for a favourable opportunity to break out to the detriment of Germany, and she therefore seized most promptly on the necessary German advance through Belgium as a pretext in order to cloak her brutal national selfishness with a mantle of respectability.

Before the war we should have said that the differences of these two men reached deeper—or higher—than any military considerations; that it was with the value of life as a whole, and with the interests of mankind as one vast family, that their work was concerned. For the one the value of life was mainly spiritual, for the other material progress was the sole aim; one would have imagined this difference to be too fundamental to allow of close agreement in their views of a great international catastrophe.

But the spirit was willing and the flesh was not weak, and these two minds found that they could agree more closely as to the rights and wrongs of a war in this world of material forces than they had ever differed as to the value or existence of a world of spiritual forces.

In "The Times" of 5 October, 1914, was published another utterance of Professor Eucken, contained in a letter to Dr. Wendte, the well-known organizer of "Free Religious World Conferences":—

Jena, 17 August. Our plans for travel have been destroyed by the world-war. We had arranged for our journey to Japan, and had secured passages on the Siberian Railway for the beginning of September, but now comes suddenly the great overturn, and transforms Europe into an armed camp. But there is something great and uplifting in the unity, firmness, and assurance of victory which Germany displays in this state of affairs. Certainly never in its history was Germany so united and so great. Our two sons also have gone to the war, and the youngest is probably already in the midst of battle. All men competent for military service present themselves. Everything presses forward to take up arms. The feeling of embitterment is strongest against England. It will hereafter always be counted our worst enemy, and our intellectual work together will be ended for an incalculable time. The more, however, do we hope for a close and friendly relation with America.—(Signed) Rudolf Eucken.

The example had been set, and unfortunately it was followed by some in other countries as well as Germany. We have referred to the discussion inaugurated by Professor Sayce—this came later as the war-fever increased in intensity. But the collective manifesto of the German professors drew forth an English reply which, if reasoned and just, as we in England hold it to be, yet erred by its departure from the standpoint of philosophy and intellectual life. It would have been better to decline, *qua* learned professors, to do more than rebuke the use of

learning in the cause of militarism—to denounce the confusion of *Kultur* with army tactics.

As was to be expected, the popular English response to the German philosophical attitude was still less detached and comprehensive in character. "German culture" became a byword and the target of witty or dull, wise or foolish satire.

Before long one had hints that the reactionary was at work. "German culture" was to be regarded as identical with German militarism, hence all inconvenient results of German scholarship might be swept on to the dust-heap; and we could settle down comfortably, once more, to the lazy beliefs that German criticism had disturbed.

On this subject a note—an ominous note—was struck by a letter in "The Times" of 7 September, signed *Fides*.

> The very spirit of the blasphemer (he writes) seems to have passed into the armies of his country. The ruins of Louvain show us the interesting theory of the "will to power" put into practice. And if Nietzsche blasphemously challenged the ethical teaching of Christ, what have German theologians of the twentieth century done but attack and minimize His unique claims? According to Jensen His existence is a myth, according to Schweitzer and Weiss His ethical teaching is based on a false view of the Second Advent, and can no longer be thought to hold good.

In the sphere of religious ideals the main contribution of German scholars of the twentieth century has been not merely to seek to shatter traditional views of orthodoxy, but to strike a blow at those very laws of Christian ethic upon which, with whatever failure and imperfection, the edifice of Christendom is based. The present war is to Russia a war of the Russian people, and it is the Russian mujik for whom Dostoievsky has made the claim that he shall save the world. He is the embodiment of those "slave-virtues" against which Nietzsche raved; he is not led by the brute-ideal of the Superman, but by the Divine ideal of the Crucified. Against the gospel of force he stands for humility, patient suffering, loving-kindness. There are no dreams of world dominion in the heart of the Russian people; dreams they have, but not of world empire. They stand, if any nation on earth does, for that "foolishness of God which is wiser than men," that "weakness of God which is stronger than men," in fact for that very type of the supernatural power of humility and simplicity which of all St. Paul's teaching roused the most maniacal of Neitzsche's outbursts.

No nation lives up to its ideals consistently, nevertheless it is ideals that count. General von Bernhardi's doctrine that in international politics might is right is clear and plain. The German nation do their best to act upon it. The strongest motive power of the Russian people is religion, and that the religion of the Gospel; the suffering Christ, not the triumphing Napoleon, is and always has been their ideal. It is between these two ideals that the European struggle is to be contested. Before a horrified world Germany is putting into practice on the battle-field the theories which her academic teachers have long been teaching in the study. The anti-Christ ethics of Nietzsche, coupled with the reduced Christianity of Liberal German Protestantism, with

the theories of the Christ-myth, the *Interimsethik*, the Pauline origin of Christianity, the indebtedness of Paul and the mystery religions—all this body of thought, ranging from direct antagonism to subtle undermining of Christian faith and Christian moral law, stands face to face with the simple belief of the most religious nation in Europe. Is this culture *versus* barbarism?

This is a form of retaliation suggestive of weakness; as indeed are most forms of retaliation.

Thought and learning, art and music, may bear certain characteristics of the country in which they are begotten; but they are also the products of humanity itself, or they would make no appeal to the world at large. The monuments of the German mind are no more robbed of their intellectual value by the national crime of this war than German mountains are robbed of their natural grandeur; German forests of their solemnity; German rivers of their width and volume.

We can be perfectly determined on the destruction of German militarism without refusing to listen to the sonatas of Beethoven and the operas of Wagner; to delight in the poetry of Goethe and Heine; to study Kant and Fichte and Schopenhauer; to absorb the learning of the great German school of criticism.

True conquest is consummated by a process of

assimilation; a process, by the way, in which the Anglo-Saxon race may claim a certain excellence. They have a knack of swallowing their invaders and bringing them up more English than themselves; and this because they have drawn from them elements to strengthen their own life. It would be one of the saddest results of war if this characteristic were weakened or effaced.

But such an illusion cannot last long. The great thinkers of Germany, France, and England, the historians, the critics, above all the poets and the musicians are waiting, with perhaps an indulgent smile, to come into their own once more. Men will not refuse the bread of life for ever, in whatever mill it was ground. The mutual understanding of Shakespeare and Goethe lies deeper than the antagonism of their countrymen; and one sonata of Beethoven might suffice to loose the deeper springs of life and melt the frozen waters of national egotism.

CHAPTER X.

PEACE.

It is easier to die well than to live well; it is easier to make war than to make peace. Europe has made many treaties, she has never yet made peace. Is there any justification for the hopes of those who trust that this war will lead to something in the nature of an abiding peace? that if not actually the last one it will mark a stage in the process of the definite destruction of militarism?

I am avoiding, in this place, every kind of directly political and technical question. Much will depend on the wisdom and self-restraint shown by both sides in the rearrangement of the European map. Mistakes will, sooner or later, entail their inevitable consequences, and the statesmen who have agonized most in the effort to avert war will not agonize less when the time has come to end it. There are international problems to which the success of neither side will have contributed a solution; for it is not by

victory, and it is still less by defeat, that either party can be brought to admit of any grain of justice on the other side; which is, after all, the only way in which an international dispute can be peaceably solved.

It is in virtue of the existence of those problems that we find ourselves at war; it is not always in virtue of our understanding of them. Each side has its own point of view; an international problem is the tangled web of all those points of view. Justice lies, in the main, in most cases, on one side or the other; yet no side is ever so wholly in the right as not to be in the least degree in the wrong. As a rule the country that wins believes that success has crowned the justice of its cause; while the defeated nations believe that wrong has triumphed, and that it is their business to await another chance. Thus it is that we end up with a treaty, but not with peace, for peace demands a perfection of adjustment, a clearness of perception, of which we are not capable.

We may, indeed, cherish a certain confidence that in so far as a nation based its policy on pure militarism, a military failure may lead it to reconsider its philosophy; that in so far as a policy of pure national egotism found itself in contradiction with the general movement of humanity, it may

ask itself whether the day for that policy be not drawing to a close. But, on the other hand, from the merely political, and not the human, standpoint, neither victory nor defeat will necessarily bring either side to view the matter in the light of pure justice and objective truth.

Meanwhile the diplomat will take the place of the soldier; not with the idea of final occupation, but to carry on the business by different methods until the turn of the soldier has again come round. Thus we might be no nearer the attainment of an ideal of universal peace than before the war began.

And yet, in spite of all past disappointments, there is a steadily growing minority—a minority only in point of publicity, not in point of sheer numbers—who believe that war should end; that it is not only a disgrace to our common humanity, but, what is as ridiculous as it is immoral, an anachronism; and who do firmly hope that this present war, with its monstrous waste of life, and the goods of life, should at last convert Europe from its use. Is their hope a vain or a reasonable one?

First of all let us remember that the advocates of war and of peace do not constitute two absolutely opposed camps, but are blended at one end as they are sharply opposed at the other.

War and peace are the two great ruling categories, with many subordinate ones, which may be qualified as pacifist or militarist according to the extreme with which we may contrast them.

Thus militarism, pure and simple, may be defined as the uncompromising advocacy of war as not only a necessity, but a beneficial necessity ; a wholesome corrective of the vices of peace ; an indispensable stimulus to spiritual as well as material development. This is not only *German* militarism, but the militarism of every race that upholds war as an essential and permanent element of international life.

A more modified militarism regards war as a standing possibility, as an evil, indeed, but an evil with counter-balancing advantages. This form of militarism would diminish, as far as possible, the occasions of war, and soften its methods, but would not aim at its wholesale abolition.

Pacifism, at the opposite end, uncompromising pacifism, regards universal peace as an immediate and attainable ideal. For it the army is an immoral institution ; every war, on both sides, an unjust war. Peace begets peace, and war begets war ; disarmament and arbitration are the only remedies.

Then there is the more philosophic attitude of those who regard universal peace as a remote,

but not immediately attainable, ideal. A selfish peace is as bad as a selfish war ; it may be our duty to fight for others as well as ourselves.

With many light shades and differences these are the conflicting views which hold the field.

As to militarism, we have studied it in studying that ruthlessness which is one of the characteristics of war. According to the qualified, or unqualified, militarism of a race will be the qualified, or unqualified, relentlessness of its military methods. But war, in itself, is not meek and gentle, or chivalrous and generous, or just and dispassionate, but angry and vindictive, cunning and crafty, fierce and one-sided. Civilized warfare is, properly and strictly, not warfare at all. The semi-militarist races, just because they have mixed sentiments as to the right and wrong of war in itself, will wage it under laws and conditions not rigidly military in their character.

As for pacifism, how does it stand after the present experience? Are the pacifists still alive at all ; or, at any rate, are there any left in the belligerent countries? And are the few that remain wandering like ghosts amidst the ruins of their shattered hopes?

We are here speaking, first, of that sheer, unqualified pacifism that will have war at no price and peace at any ; that would rather expose a

country, unarmed, to the onslaught of its foes, than permit it to do evil in order to avoid destruction; that would dissolve the force of an army by breaking up its discipline. And we are speaking, next, of the more thoughtful and measured pacifism, that believes in the possibility of ending international war by a tribunal of international justice, supported by an army of international police.

As to the first of these forms of pacifism, is it not one of those ideals based on the defiance of facts, and doomed to worse than failure: to working injury to its own cause? Those who would weaken military discipline in the belief that, war being wrong, the forces of war should be disintegrated; those who would risk the existence of their own country in the endeavour to make of the whole world but one country, are imposing on others standards of duty and sacrifice that they have only a right to exact of themselves. In the name of liberty they are exercising unjust domination, and, in spite of their anti-militarism, are driving men into ranks and ordering their movements.

Such pacifism is a form of political *futurism.*

Now futurism, again, is of more than one kind. The futurist may be one who sees, more or less dimly or more or less distinctly, things that are to come, but that have not yet arrived. He is more

long-sighted than his average neighbours, but his focus is correct, and he does not make the mistake of fancying that the distant mountain range is on his own garden lawn. He may be anxious to reach that mountain range, but he is conscious of the intervening country, and does not imagine that he will find it at the other end of his telescope. Such a futurist may not be able to persuade the world of the truth of his vision, yet he can have reasonable confidence that his sight is correct, and there are those who will believe that, though they may not see that vision for themselves, they have proof of its reality in seeing the one who sees it. This is the rational form of futurism, a recognition of the fact that the world goes on, and advances, we hope, on the whole, to some good purpose, and that there is always a vanguard possessed of higher perceptions than those of the general mass of mankind. No progress has been effected in science without the mind that dared an unproved guess; in art without the hand that dared an incomplete expression; in social reform without the prophet that put forward an, as yet, unattainable ideal. This is the true futurism—a futurism that does not give the lie to its own name by declaring itself to be present.

The other form of futurism is one that exists in virtue of the ignorance of those to whom it makes

its appeal. It is not an effort to reach what we have not yet attained, but it is the proclamation that we have attained it. It has no sense of distance, and little sense of size. It is based on a vain conviction that man can create whatever he wants instead of slowly and laboriously preparing himself for its advent.

When, then, pacifism, of the extreme form, honestly avows itself a dream and a hope, but a dream that may some day come true, and a hope that may some day be fulfilled, and an ideal that can meanwhile stimulate mankind to lofty effort, he does his own part in the life of the world, and will leave it the better, and not the worse, for his passage through it.

> Aspera tum positis mitescent saecula bellis;
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . . dirae ferro et compagibus arctis
> Claudentur Belli portae.

The second, and more scientific form of pacifism, finds its expression in the dream of our English poet of a world in which

> The war drum throbbed no longer and the battle flags were furled
> In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

This is the pacifism which advocates the use of arbitration for the definite establishment of peace—an arbitration that is not to be accepted

or rejected at will, but to be enforced by international agreement based on the employment of international force.

But is there not an obvious sophism in the juxtaposition of these two factors—international justice and international force?

In the great Schism of the West, when there were two rival Popes, an unfortunate effort was made to end the trouble by electing a third, and deposing the other two. Unfortunately the other two declined to be deposed, and thus the Church was left with three rivals instead of two.

Might not the same disaster ensue from the establishment of an international army for the enforcement of international justice? What if the two countries refuse the decision of the international tribunal and take up arms against one another? Then the international army must take up arms against both, and the whole world will be in flames.

On the whole Bernhardi's arguments against the practicability of arbitration between states are sound.

> On what right (he asks) is the finding of this Arbitration Court based? and what sanctions ensure that the parties will accept this finding?

He points out that :—

A quite different consciousness of right and wrong develops in individuals, whether persons or peoples, and this consciousness finds its expression in most varied forms, and lives in the heart of the people by the side of, and frequently in opposition to, the established law.

. . . . . .

Even if a comprehensive international code were drawn up, no self-respecting nation would sacrifice its own conception of right to it.[1]

These are not only the sentiments of German national egotism, but of all national politics. The nation that is strong enough to secure what it believes to be its rights, would never submit the discussion of those rights to a third party. France would not have submitted the question of Alsace and Lorraine to an international tribunal; nor Russia the political existence of Serbia; nor England the neutrality of Belgium. It is extremely difficult to get two contending individuals to accept the principle of arbitration; and if they do so, it is only because, in any case, they have to submit to some kind of neutral tribunal. I fear that none of the European powers would accept the principle of arbitration, and submit to the rulings of an impartial international tribunal, in case of the uprising of a native savage race against the severity, or injustice, of their rule.

[1] "Germany and the Next War," pp. 30-32.

Might is Right, but the sort of might which enables one nation to govern another in time of peace is very unlike the armoured thrust of the war-engine. It is a power compounded of sympathy and justice. The English (it is admitted by many foreign critics) have studied justice and desired justice. They have inquired into and protected rights that were unfamiliar, and even grotesque, to their own ideas, because they believed them to be rights . . . they have a genius for equality; and they do try to put themselves in the other fellow's place, to see how the position looks from that side. What has happened in India may perhaps be taken to prove, among other things, that the inhabitants of India begin to know that England has done her best and does feel a disinterested solicitude for the peoples under her charge.[1]

These words are true and Englishmen may be proud to read them. Yet, because England is large-minded and just in her methods of government, we must not think that egotism is peculiar to Germany. We did not conquer India, nor have we continued to rule her, solely, or mainly, for the sake of the Indians. It may be, indeed it almost undoubtedly *is*, for their good that we should govern them; but we should flatter ourselves too much by supposing this to be our single motive. And if the Indians are loyal to our government, that is not because they think we are there for their sake, but because they know

[1] "Might is Right," by Walter Raleigh. Oxford Pamphlets, No. 8.

that politically they would be ruined without us, and would fall under some other less enlightened form of foreign government.

And yet, if the more politically advanced nations of Europe are not free from that national egotism, which Germany so shamelessly professes, yet the fact that they are applying, as far as possible, the political code and free charter of their own constitutions to the peoples they govern, is a sign that they are advancing towards a higher international standard of ethics. They are not yet governing for the sake of the governed, but in so far as they are beginning to govern with fairness and sympathy they are on the way to do so. Whether that ideal will ultimately be attained is a question which only the future will decide. But it is something if certain nations of Europe have come even to wish to attain it, though they may overrate their own achievements in the matter.

The conclusion of all these conflicting considerations is surely that the reign of universal peace and justice is a human, and not an international aim and ideal; and can therefore only be ultimately attained by methods proportioned to its character. Mankind absolutely desires peace; nations only desire it under certain conditions, and justly so.

Macchiavelli is deeply right when he says :—

> Many have pictured republics and principalities which in fact have never been known or seen, because how one lives is so far distant from how one ought to live, that he who neglects what is done for what ought to be done sooner effects his ruin than his preservation ; for a man who wishes to act entirely up to his professions of virtue soon meets with what destroys him among so much that is evil.

And again :—

> In the world there are only the vulgar, for the few find a place there only when the many have no ground to rest on.

So long as "peace at any price" may signify peace with dishonour, it is not the noblest races that will refuse, under any considerations, to fight, whether for themselves or for others.

But national life is not the supreme form of human life, and humanity is a deeper reality than race. It may be that national distinctions will gradually be eliminated as a higher civilization makes its way in the world; but it is not even necessary to suppose this in order to believe in a future wherein brute force will have ceased to be the supreme arbiter. Nationality may still exist, and as strongly as it does now, but it may become just the manifestation of human life instead of being, as at present, its ruling element. In a measure we have now to be Englishmen or Germans in order to be men ;

eventually our English and German characteristics may be simply the form and character in which our humanity expresses itself. National life and ideals must lag behind human life and ideals ; yet woe to the world that would abolish them before mankind is ready.

Who can say that mankind is yet ready? Can we live without effort? and can we discard our present form of effort until we have reached the plane of higher and more spiritual effort? Can we escape the struggles of the brute and the sufferings of the brute, so long as we are still brutal and sensual? Can we avoid the penalty of rival egotisms until we have ceased to be egotistic? Can we evade the uprising of the oppressed so long as a single tyrant exists? Can we enjoy the peace of the wise while we are yet so pathetically stupid? Can we live as spirits while we are still sunk in materialism?

An ideal is a great and inspiring object for action and effort ; but it is a mischievous element in life when it tempts men to behave as though they were already in the place where they hope, some day, to be.

CHAPTER XI.

SUB SPECIE ÆTERNITATIS.

PEACE will come at last, and we shall go back to our old interests, wondering to find life so much the same as it used to be.

We are but a generation on the life of this globe; our joys and sufferings are woven into one great tissue of past, present, and future; as we did not make our own conditions so neither can we make the conditions of the generations that are to follow us; we can do our part, we can do no more.

Hence there is, I fear, a certain Utopianism in the views of those who think that a totally new world should emerge from this conflict; a world in which all the desired social reforms will at once be set on foot, in which muddles will be ended and life reshaped on perfect conditions of physical and moral health.

Half our lesson we shall quickly forget; many of our former squabbles we shall quickly resume;

most of our old faults and vices we shall find as vigorous as ever.

The passions that go to the making of war are elemental, and so are the passions that have their play in time of peace. We were united by the presence of a common foe; when that foe is vanquished or reconciled we shall find something to criticize amongst our own friends. Until all classes and individuals of a community are united in the pursuit of a common end, or the destruction of a common foe, they will be liable to internal warfare, just as nations will be liable to international warfare until they too are united against a common enemy, or in the pursuit of a common end.

If a neighbouring planet made war on this one there would be, at once, not only a united Europe, but a united world to face it; when that planet withdrew its baneful forces we should again be conscious of separate continents, countries, and races.

Hence it is wiser to accept the fact of our littleness, and to recognize that our generation cannot produce a new and perfect society, but can only do its part towards that end. Each individual can, to some extent, modify and strengthen his own character; but he cannot change it for another. Each class of individuals can labour at the cor-

rection of its own vices, and can learn from other classes, but it cannot, in an instant, transform itself into a super-class, possessing the virtues of them all. Each nation can learn from enemies and from friends, but it cannot acquire the qualities of them all, nor prevent the friction of contrary aims and interests. The whole world can only take its own place in the scheme of the universe, a universe of vast forces, material and spiritual ; it can advance to more perfect union, but it can only attain it in so far as a wider destiny is unfolded to it.

We can none of us tell of what evolution mankind may eventually be capable. If material interests gradually yield the way to spiritual and intellectual ideals this world of ours may be transformed to a very different place from what it now is, and the martial qualities of man may go to the pursuit of aims far beyond any within the actual general horizon. We know little of what we are ; we know still less of what we may become.

Let us make sure, then, that this war will leave us no more omniscient or omnipotent than it found us ; that it will have taught us something, and strengthened us in some respects, but that our task will still be in front of us, to be done, if done at all, by ever-renewed exertions.

The period of reaction will be a dangerous one,

and will demand the exercise of character and firmness in a higher degree than the actual time of war. During that period there may be sown the seeds of undying international hatred, to bring forth, perhaps in many years to come, a fresh outbreak of the horrors we have witnessed, unless all the best that is in mankind be brought to bear on the making of peace. Pacifism has proved itself helpless to avert this awful international catastrophe; it does not follow that peace is not the true ideal of humanity.

When we look back on the continual tribal warfare of earlier humanity we feel that our world is not the same one; the day will probably come when posterity will look back with yet greater horror on the events of this year. Yet we, who have lived through it, know that it was not so entirely horrible as it may some day appear. Our far, far away descendants may fail to realize how much they themselves owe to noble qualities that were at work in this war, which was, on some sides, a vast effort for the elimination of the reign of brute force. It was a step in the process of the world's evolution; but it was a step up which we had to climb and on which others will stand.

One thing this war should have taught those who were in too great a hurry for the accomplish-

ment of their ideals, and that is, a fuller respect for the irresistible forces of life. Pure idealism, without due regard for facts, has proved its ineffectualness. It is useless to say that war is a bad thing, so long as it is an inevitable thing. Life will out—the strong will seek for expansion, the weak will seek to grow strong; the forces of life will clash until they find their right issue. The only way to avoid war is to respect the laws of life, whether it be the life of the strong or the life of the weak. Every genuine need of any nation is an incentive to war so long as that need is unsatisfied, or repressed by sheer "*force majeure*".

Let the pacifist take to heart this lesson, that, as there are causes for which it is worth while to die, so there are causes for which it is worth while to kill, and that a struggle which demands of men the sacrifice of their private interests and their life must, even at its worst, comprehend certain noble elements. Indeed, as life is at present constituted, it is hard to see where we should find the substitute for those ennobling dangers which produce the soldier type, in its best sense. Love peace as we may, it is good to have always before our eyes examples of perfect discipline and unquestioning devotedness; the existence of the soldier is a lesson to those who are not soldiers. He need not have all the best qualities of man-

kind, but he has some of them in a higher degree than average mankind.

Terrible as this war has been, there are many whom it has raised to nobler exertions than they would ever have undertaken without it. It would have been wholly and entirely sad had it dragged all Europe from the pursuit of higher things to a brutal, material struggle ; but it has disturbed low and mean and selfish levels of life as well as high ones.

" I rejoice," wrote a Frenchman, in a private letter, at the outbreak of war, " that my eyes have not closed before beholding this awakening of my people, somewhat spoiled by a course of material prosperity."

This is deeply true of England as of France ; just as it is also true that war put an end, temporarily, to the pursuit of spiritual and intellectual interest.

War is an anomaly ; but so also is human nature. Flesh and spirit are curious partners, and till their union is more perfectly adjusted the anomaly must make itself felt in national as in individual life. Yet the aim in both is harmony and peace ; and life would indeed be robbed of its beauty and glory if an aim were abandoned because its attainment lay beyond the reach of our generation.

But meanwhile we cannot afford to lose any of the values of life, and a peace that was to be gained by the loss of those qualities of moral and physical courage, of generosity and self-sacrifice, that have hitherto found their object and expression in war, would be a peace that brought great losses along with its gains. We feel that those qualities must find another outlet, and that the field of battle must be changed for some realm of higher endeavour before material warfare can cease. So long as international life is beset by evils which only international warfare can end, war must remain a possibility ; when those cruder material evils are eradicated, then fresh fields of effort will be open to mankind, in which his desire to live or die for something greater than his private existence will find its satisfaction.

But our generation, in its positiveness, is inclined to block the future by its determination to work only for an end it can clearly perceive. Anything else is denounced as dreamy and unpractical, and the pacifist is pointed out as a proof of the futility of such dreaming. But in this our practical people are as much mistaken as the dreamers. The dreamers deny what *is*, the practical people deny what *will be*. The dreamer may be dreaming true dreams, though he sees as present what is future ; the practical man may

be dogmatizing as to a future of which he knows nothing.

But if we know nothing of it, is it not mischievous to let it influence our working life? It will be mischievous if we try to get the results before we have earned them; it will not be mischievous if we set our life and efforts in the direction of those results. Every action is more or less incalculable in its effects; and the action of nations evidently more so than that of individuals.

There is a just agnosticism which refuses to drag the unknown into the category of the known; there is a false agnosticism which denies the unknown. This latter agnosticism is deadening in its influence; it robs man of his state in the future.

Mazzini, who was a political prophet even though he may have been unpractical as to immediate contingencies, insisted on this respect for the unknown when he upheld the necessity of a religious element in politics. For religion, putting aside all consideration of its definite and characteristic forms, stands for the belief in the unknown and yet unachieved possibilities of mankind. It is in those unknown possibilities that the hopes of true human life reside. We could none of us live wholly content with what we have fathomed to its last depth. The most practical

minds must admit that the unknown element of to-morrow is what lends to-day a good part of its value. To refuse the possibilities of the unknown would be to confine ourselves within the four walls of our own limitations, without a hope of exit.

Political parties fail and die (wrote Mazzini),[1] religious parties never die until after they have achieved their victory; until their vital principle has attained its fullest development and become identified with the progress of civilization and manners.

Then, and not before then, does God infuse into the heart of a people, or the brain of an individual strong in genius and love, a new idea, vaster and more fruitful than the idea then expiring; the centre of faith is moved one degree onwards, and only they who rally round that centre constitute the party of the future. . . No, eternal God! Thy Word is not all fulfilled; thy thought, the thought of the world, not all revealed. That thought creates still, and will continue to create for ages incalculable by man. The ages that have passed have but revealed to us some fragments of it. Our mission is not concluded. As yet we scarcely know its origin, we know not its ultimate aim. . . . From initiation to initiation, throughout the series of thy successive incarnations, this mission has purified and enlarged the formula of sacrifice; it learns the path it has to follow by the study of an eternally progressive faith. . . . Who shall tell how many stars, secular thoughts, liberated from every cloud, shall arise and take their place in the heaven of intellect, ere

[1] "Faith and the Future"—Essays of Mazzini. (Walter Scott Pub. Co.)

man, the living summary of the terrestrial Word, may declare: "I have faith in myself, my destiny is accomplished".

. . . . . .

Every epoch is essentially synthetic; every epoch is organic. The progressive evolution of the thought of God, of which our world is the visible manifestation, is unceasingly continuous. The chain cannot be broken or interrupted. The various aims are united together—the cradle is linked to the tomb.

Only in some such faith can practical politics and the pursuit of the ideal be united; if we abandon the former we break ourselves on the rock of material necessity, if we renounce the latter it will seem to the best of the world that it would not much matter if we *were* thus broken and destroyed.

We fight then, in our days, no longer for the sake of fighting, as primitive man fought, and the savage yet fights. We fight no longer, at least according to the professions of those statesmen we trust as interpreters of modern political life, for the sake of conquest and domination. We fight to deliver ourselves from a state of things which impedes human progress; and we fight in order to return to those higher interests we have had to set aside while fighting.

Furthermore, and it is more truthful and more chastening to own than to deny it, we fight also because we cannot, on either side, in all prob-

ability help it; because our best, as well as our worst, efforts have combined to produce a tangle which can only be torn to pieces by violence.

I compare Fortune to one of those raging rivers, which when in flood overflows the plains sweeping away trees and buildings . . . yet . . . it does not follow that men, when the weather becomes fair, shall not make provision.

Fate, or fortune, has swept us into the catastrophe of this war, as well as the ambition of rulers, or the perfidy of statesmen, or any other cause.

We shall come out of it better—but not better in every respect. We shall be liable to those reactionary vices which are the consequences of a reactionary condition of things. The unsuspicious and generous may have learned to suspect; the trusting and tolerant may have learned to hate; the disinterested may have learned a lesson of egotism.

To counteract such unhappy possibilities we need all the faith and idealism of those whose social trust has been sorely tried by this temporary suspension of their hopes. The heart of the people is sound, and it is the people who lose most and gain least by war. We know now what modern warfare is. We still believe that it is better than slavery, or dishonour, or injustice, but we see too that it is hideous, and

brutal, and destructive of things that no power on earth can replace. We shall be on the right line of progress if we aim, not at the abolition of war, but at the transformation of the social and political and international conditions that render war inevitable.

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